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Outgoing Student Mobility Satisfaction at Laurea University of Applied Sciences

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**Outgoing Student Mobility Satisfaction at
Laurea University of Applied Sciences**

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This Bachelors' thesis researches the satisfaction of Laurea University of Applied Sciences' students who were participating in the student mobility period in 2013 - 2014. The commissioner of this research is the International Office of Laurea University of Applied Sciences.

The main focus is to examine the student mobility that is part of the degree programme studies and lasts at least three months and maximum one year. The theoretical framework discusses exchange studies and international traineeships in general and what kind of benefits and competitiveness a student might gain during a mobility period. The theory part also includes the descriptions of the mobility process in Laurea University of Applied Sciences and discusses the motivations to carry out part of the studies abroad, as well as evaluates how do Finnish employees see this new group of internationally skilled labor that have been experienced a student mobility period. In addition, the thesis also reviews how globalization and internalization has effected to Finnish higher education institutions and Finnish working life and industries

The empirical part of this thesis was carried out by using a quantitative research method. The commissioner provided the results of the questionnaire that mobility students need to fill after returning home. In the research, the focus was on the factors that were dealing with the satisfaction of the mobility students in three different areas; by the destination country, type of the mobility and exchange programme. In order to research the satisfaction of students, it is necessary to take a look into motivational factors for the mobility period and examine if the goals set for the mobility period were accomplished. It is also important to examine what kind of facilities a host institution or work place offered for mobility students to figure out what aspects are the most appreciated by the mobility students. The research permit was granted by Laurea University of Applied Sciences.

The results indicate that student mobility via Laurea is easy and well-organized. The International Office, alongside with fellow students and lecturers is a valued asset when it comes to information seeking. The most common motivators to go abroad are personal growth and experiencing new cultures as well as learning foreign languages.

Satisfaction differences between types of mobility are relatively small, but slight variation shows when evaluating academic and professional usefulness in the future. Dispersion among mobility programmes are more drastic than those of mobility type. Nordplus has continuously the lowest scores whereas Bilateral scores the highest in every aspect. When comparing the overall results with mobility destination, the spread of values was great. The most popular countries hosting the largest number of students, such Spain, Germany, UK and the Netherlands, did well in the survey yet not reaching the highest scores. The countries with the highest scores and thus most satisfied students were Mexico, Ghana and Indonesia. Latvia, Slovenia and Vietnam scored the lowest.

Key words: Internationalization, student exchange, job placement, student mobility, satisfaction

Emma Heikkinen, Hanna Karttunen

Lähteiden vaihto-opiskelijoiden tyytyväisyys Laurea-ammattikorkeakoulussa

Vuosi 2015 Sivumäärä 67

Tässä opinnäytetyössä tutkittiin Laurea-ammattikorkeakoulusta vuosina 2013 ja 2014 opiskelijavaihtoon ja ulkomaille työharjoitteluun lähteneiden opiskelijoiden tyytyväisyyttä. Tutkimuksen toimeksiantaja oli Laurea-ammattikorkeakoulun kansainvälinen toimisto.

Opinnäytetyössä keskityttiin tutkimaan opiskelijaliikkuvuutta, joka tapahtuu osana korkeakoulujen koulutusohjelmaa ja joka kestää vähintään kolme kuukautta ja enintään yhden vuoden. Opinnäytetyössä käsiteltiin ulkomaille vaihto-opiskelua ja työharjoittelua yleisesti ja minkälaisista hyötyä ja kilpailukykyä opiskelija voi saavuttaa opiskelijaliikkuvuuden aikana. Opinnäytetyössä tarkasteltiin myös tapahtumasarjaa, jonka opiskelijaliikkuvuuteen osallistuva Laurea-ammattikorkeakoulun opiskelija käy läpi pyrkiessään vaihtoon. Vaihtoon lähdön syyt ja suomalaisten työnantajien suhtautuminen kansainvälisen tietotaidon omaaviin entisiin vaihto-opiskelijoihin olivat yksi mielenkiinnon kohteista. Lisäksi tässä työssä tarkasteltiin, miten globalisaatio ja kansainvälistyminen on vaikuttanut suomalaisiin korkeakouluihin ja suomalaiseen työelämään.

Tutkimus suoritettiin hyödyntäen kvantitatiivista eli määrällistä tutkimusmenetelmää. Toimeksiantaja antoi kyselylomakkeen, jonka opiskelijaliikkuvuuteen osallistuneet Laurea-ammattikorkeakoulun opiskelijat ovat joutuneet täyttämään, ja tulokset, joita hyödynnettiin tutkimuksessa. Tutkimus keskittyi tekijöihin, joissa käsiteltiin opiskelijaliikkuvuuteen osallistuneiden tyytyväisyyttä kolmella eri osa-alueella: kohdemaan, opiskelijaliikkuvuuden tyyppin ja vaihto-ohjelman mukaan. Jotta voitiin tutkia opiskelijoiden tyytyväisyyttä, oli oleellista tarkastella vaihtoon lähdön syitä ja tutkia, toteutuivatko asetetut tavoitteet opiskelijaliikkuvuuden aikana. Oli myös tärkeää ottaa selvää, millaisia mahdollisuuksia vastaanottava korkeakoulu tai työpaikka tarjoaa opiskelijoille, ja arvioida mitä näkökohtia opiskelijat arvostavat eniten.

Tulokset osoittivat, että vaihtoon lähtö Laurean kautta on helppoa ja organisoitu hyvin. Sekä kansainvälinen toimisto että muut opiskelijat ja lektorit koettiin voimavarana ja hyvänä tiedon lähteenä. Syyt vaihtoon lähdön takana olivat monipuoliset, mutta suurimmat syyt ovat henkilökohtaisessa kasvussa, uusien kulttuurien kokemisessa ja vieraiden kielten opiskelussa.

Tyytyväisyserot opiskelijaliikkuvuuden tyyppien, eli vaihto-opiskelijoiden, ulkomaille työharjoittelun suorittaneiden ja nämä kaksi yhdistäneiden opiskelijoiden välillä olivat vähäiset, mutta pientä hajontaa oli havaittavissa arvioitaessa vaihtokokemuksen akateemista ja ammatillista hyödyllisyyttä. Vaihto-ohjelmien tyytyväisyserot olivat suuremmat, ja osoittivat selkeästi, että Nordplus-opiskelijat olivat vähiten tyytyväisiä kokemukseen, kun taas FIRST-ohjelman kautta tai Bilateral-sopimuksen tehneet antoivat korkeimmat pisteet jokaisessa kategoriassa. Maiden vertailussa opiskelijamäärältään suosittummat maat, Espanja, Saksa, Iso-Britannia ja Alankomaat pärjäsivät hyvin, mutta eivät saavuttaneet korkeimpia pisteitä. Tutkimuksen mukaan parhaimmat kohdemaat olivat Meksiko, Ghana ja Indonesia. Heikoiten vertailussa menestyivät Latvia, Slovenia ja Vietnam

Avainsanat: Kansainvälisyys, vaihto-opiskelu, työharjoittelu, opiskelijaliikkuvuus, tyytyväisyys

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1 Introduction

Student mobility and including internationalization in the studies have become relevant part of the Finnish higher education. Ever since the Finnish Ministry of Education decided to include a module to all degree programmes to support internationalization (Ministry of Education 2009, 31), students have been able to participate international activities even if their degree programmes are not directly connected to the subject. It has been researched that student mobility period helps, for instance, a student to gain international experience, language skills (Saarikallio-Torp & Wiers-Jenssen 2010, 13) among the many other resources that might help them during and after the studies.

This thesis focuses on the mobility period that a student has a chance to carry out during the higher degree studies. The student mobility period can be either a student exchange done in a foreign higher education institution or a placement abroad. Finnish higher education institutions generally have an own organization, the International Office, that helps students to organize a student mobility period that is related to their studies. The Finnish state supports the internationalization of Finnish higher degree students (Saarikallio-Torp & Wiers-Jenssen 2010, 69) and hereby mobility periods are widely advertised to the students.

Alongside with basic introduction of the different types of the student mobility, the theory of this thesis also discusses if the student mobility period is boosting the competitiveness of a job applicant in the recruitment process and how the globalization is visible and affected to the Finnish working life and industry.

The research part of the thesis is conducted for the International Office of Laurea University of Applied Sciences (Laurea) and it examines satisfaction of the Laurea students that were doing their student mobility period in 2013 -2014. The research data were obtained from the feedback form that students need to fill after the mobility period and the research questions were planned together with the International Office of Laurea. The research questions were examined by using quantitative research method since the research covered plenty of information about the returning students.

2 Background and Objectives of the Research

This Bachelors' thesis examines the student mobility in Laurea and explores the satisfaction of the students that have done their mobility period in 2013 - 2014. The authors decided to take a contact with the International Office of Laurea and suggest if the research is needed. The International Office accepted the proposal of the research since this kind of research has never been done before in Laurea and the topic is current since including the student mobility

period in the studies is getting more popular between the higher degree students year by year, and that is why it is important to examine if the students have been happy with their experience abroad and how does the host institutions and Laurea answer the needs of the mobility students.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate overall student mobility satisfaction as well as re-search the theme from three different areas related to student mobility; the exchange programmes, mobility destinations and types of mobility. The research questions are;

How satisfied are the mobility student with their international experience?

How does the satisfaction of the mobility students differ between the mobility destinations?

What kind of differences there are between exchange students, students that have done a placement abroad and those who have combined these two?

Are there differences in the satisfaction between the exchange programmes?

The motivation of the study was that the both of the authors have done a mobility period abroad and thus are in the same line with the students whom data have been used in this re-search. By being in the same line with the research objectives, helps the authors to understand the results and possible issues that are documented in this study.

This study is not just for the International Office of Laurea, but also for the upcoming mobility students to encourage them to do an exchange or a placement period abroad and help them to decide, for instance, what kind of student mobility period suits them the best.

3 Globalization and Internationalization

The next chapters are dealing with globalization and internationalization in general terms and in Finland. These two terms are easily confused with each other. The first chapter is mainly discussing about the globalization and later ones are more focused on the internationalization. These two terms are related to closely to student mobility since student mobility encourages student to become more international and aware about the big questions that are related to a modern world (Leppänen, Lähdemäki, Mokka, Neuvonen, Orjasniemi & Ritola 2013, 7) where the nations and communities are more depended on other nations and communities.

A term “globalization” is a complicated concept (Lovio, Jääskeläinen, Laurila & Lilja 2006, 1), however the word “global” refers to a matter that affects that covers the whole world (Välimaa 2001, 61) and globalization is commonly referred as a concept that is connected with economics, political and cultural issues. The public awareness of the world getting smaller day by day has made globalization as a term popular. (Välimaa, Aittola, Honkimäki,

Jalkanen, Kallio, Määttä & Piesanen 2001, 213). Due to combined effects of the technological development and liberalization of the international markets, globalization reached new dimension in the beginning of the 2000s (Ali-Yrkkö & Palmberg 2006, 13). Nevertheless, even before the new wave of the globalization, nations have always been connected in different ways throughout history and depending from one other, particularly small open economy such as Finland depends on international trade to a notable degree (Ali-Yrkkö & Palmberg 2006, 13).

The globalization is often connected with the spreading of the Western, particularly American culture (Sadykova, Myrzabekov, Myrzabekova & Moldakhmetkyzy 2014, 8). For the regular citizen this is the most showing element of the globalization, for example, most of us, particularly in the first world countries have given up of old traditional way of dressing and instead wearing modern western clothes such as t-shirts and jeans. This means that a Finnish person and Japanese person wear exactly the same styled clothes even if the countries are located opposite parts of the globe. Naturally, this means loss of diversity and cultural identity (Sadykova et al 2014, 9) since the new imported cultural habits might dominate the old traditional ones. Even though, this is not a new trend and has happened multiple times during the history, for instance, during the European colonization of Latin America. This phenomenon is referred as “cultural diffusion” and nowadays most of the cultures have borrowed traditions from the other cultures (Todisco 2009, 203). Homogeneity that is one of the concepts connected to globalization and can be a result of a cultural fusion is not desirable, however a total heterogeneity where all cultures are completely separated and do not share the same views is as well not desirable (Todisco 2009, 188).

Nevertheless, the globalization, together with advanced technology has given people the possibility to communicate with other people from different cultures around the world (Sadykova et al 2014, 9). Particularly the newer generations are able to speak at least one of the world’s widely spoken languages, generally, English. By sharing a common language, the people are easily able to share information, knowledge and learn about each other without using third party translators.

Schengen-agreement between certain the European Union countries is a good example how the globalization has affected to a border control and ensured free mobility inside of the Schengen area and how the agreement has created external non-territorial boundaries to control migration and the flow of the asylum seekers outside of the region. (Kofman 2008, 19.) This topic is current since the recent events in the Middle East and Africa have caused a major flow of the asylum seekers to search a shelter in the European Union. Nevertheless the flow of the thousands of refugees has disturbed the Schengen-agreement since nations

belonging to Schengen have started to build fences on their borders to control the massive migration.

Natural hazards and catastrophes that have happened in the certain parts of the globe during the last decades have had huge impact to the whole world since the increased travelling and the modern information channels can reach a large audience within a short period of time. However, this as well means that the aid from all over the world to the destination can be transported faster than ever and the international organizations are able to share their know-how and are able to help those in need fast and professionally during the first stages of the catastrophe. (Skelton 2008, 57.) These facts point out that the world has got smaller due to the globalization and the crises and events might have an effect in the community other side of the world.

Globalization has brought also the national economies together, in 2008 a full-fledged economic crisis started in the European Union menacing the existence of the common currency, euro, and threaten the whole global economy. This crisis has had effect particularly in countries that have euro as the currency; the worst example being the collapse of Greece, which the other euro countries needed to support to avoid the total collapse of euro. (Howarth & Quaglia 2015, 457-458). Other major economic crisis in 2015 where the fall of Chinese stock markets effected greatly to the stock markets all over the world and caused them to fall as well (the Economist 2015). These two incidents refer that economies of the world are nowadays closely depending from each other and fall or rise of one national economy can cause others to fall or rise as well.

All in all, globalization is clearly visible and having an effect almost every sector in the everyday life in the 2010s. There are both, good and bad consequences related to the phenomenon of the globalization and in the future it seems that the globalization will be even more present in the daily lives than it has ever been.

3.1 Globalization of the Finnish Working Life

Finland lies in the border that separates West and East Europe from each other and thus Finland is often called as “The westernmost Eastern European country” or “the easternmost Western European country”. During the history Finland has been part of the both, the Kingdom of Sweden and the Russian Empire until the declaration of independence in 1917. Naturally this means that Finland has got the cultural impact from both sides. The third party that Finland has got a lot influences to its culture is the German-speaking world. However, the special feature of Finnish cultural development is that despite being the closer to the

East Europe mentally than other Nordic states, Finland has developed similarly than other Nordic states. (Välilä 2001, 7-9.)

The enterprises are also greatly affected by the increasing globalization that has created opportunities and threats to the Finnish companies. The benefits are that the company has a possibility to trade goods and services internationally and expand beyond the national borders. Other way to benefit from the globalization is to establish foreign affiliates, acquiring equity and loans abroad, licensing foreign technologies and raw materials from the other countries. A good example of the company that has been using these benefits is an American enterprise called Microsoft. Microsoft has been buying innovations such as Estonian-Danish Skype and even units of companies such as the mobile phone production of Finnish Nokia and added them as new units to the existing company. Nevertheless, many companies have also transferred manufacturing from the developed countries to developing countries since the labor force is remarkably cheaper in the developing countries than in the developed countries such as Finland. (Ali-Yrkkö & Palmberg 2006, 13). The phenomenon that this trend has created has affected in a negative way to Finnish employment numbers since moving the manufacturing to the cheaper locations means often that the original factory closes down. However, even if the manufacturing has moved to another country, the innovation teams are still located in Finland. One of the examples is the city of Oulu where former Nokia engineers have established new innovative companies to develop mobile phones to other international enterprises. (Jouppi 2015.)

There are also enterprises that have been moved from the domestic ownership to the multinational ownership and due to larger resources that the foreign ownership offers, the enterprise has been able to grow bigger and expand the business in the local markets. The study by Lovio et al address that the traditional enterprises that have been moved to a foreign ownership in the city of Varkaus have not experienced bigger problems and have been able to maintain the autonomy to make decisions by themselves. Nevertheless, the enterprises with a multinational ownership are not tied to the certain city or region as the enterprises with domestic ownership. In the mid-2000s the enterprises with multinational ownerships decided to leave Varkaus behind and started to concentrate to the factories elsewhere. This led to the quitting the flight routes to Varkaus and the population of the city started to decrease. (Lovio et al 2006, 5 - 14.) This is a good example how the globalization and the changes in the markets can affect the community.

3.1.1 Brief History of Internationalization

Internationalization refers to international relationships between or among nations such as international trade, international relations, treaties, alliances and so forth. The difference

with the term “globalization” is that in the concept of the Internationalization, the basic unit remains the nation despite close and important relations with other countries. (Saunders 2013.)

From the 1950's primal production and agriculture based economy, Finland's economy has transformed greatly in a matter of few decades. Today, the largest sector of Finnish economy is services making up 65 % of the economy, followed by manufacturing and refining at 31 % and primary production at 3 %. There are three equally important sectors of exports in the Finnish economy: electrotechnical industry products, metal products, machinery and transport equipment as well as wood and paper products the most important trading partners being Sweden, Germany and Russia. (Invest in Finland 2015 a.)

Before the World War Two, Finnish industry was still quite underdeveloped and dependent on agriculture. The export was based mainly on busy lumber industry. The positive development of the lumber industry was ceased due to the War and international trade was strictly regulated up until the late 1950's. After the final payment of the war reparations in 1952, metal- and mechanical industry export grew and production of lumber multiplied due to modernization investments. (Sarkki 2014, 11-12.)

Removing the international trade restrictions in 1960's lead to industrial growth and structural change of the Finnish economy. Alongside with lumber and metal export, Finnish design and consumer goods found their way into the international trade fields. First Finnish companies to found production facilities abroad were Oy Nokia Ab with locations in Turkey and France and Kone Oy with a branch in Sweden. (Sarkki 2014, 27-28.)

In 1970, Finnish export was worth 1,6 milliard euros and grew to 7,9 milliard by 1979 much due to strong metal -, textile- and chemical industry. Despite of the objection of the Soviet Union, Finland signed a free trade contract with European Economic Community (EEC) in 1973 steering Finnish export to the West. Oil crisis and economic depression in the mid 1970's hit the lumber industry hard with over 25 % reduce in production. The loss was partly compensated with devaluation of the Finnish currency in 1977 and -78. (Sarkki 2014, 45-46, 58.)

By the 1980, export made up already 27 % of the gross domestic product and was doubled in value over the decade. Especially trade with the Soviet Union was strong. Limitations on loans and foreign investments were cast aside by 1988 making it easier for businesses to go international. (Sarkki 2014, 86.)

The Informational revolution of 1990's made radical changes to modern society. Markets, economies and consumer behaviour were unified world wide and globalisation became a recognizable phenomenon. The decade did not have a promising start due to global recession and rapidly growing unemployment. The removal of international money transfer limitations had encouraged companies to take loans overseas and as the costs rose, numerous businesses went bankrupt and loans could not be repaid. Finland went through a devastating financial crisis and unemployment rates grew in various fields of employment. In 1995 as Finland joined EU, circa 40 % of the gross domestic product consisted of export. (Sarkki 2014, 138-139.)

By the early 2000's, the Finnish business field has changed drastically. The common currency, Euro, which was not yet in use domestically, was introduced in 15 countries in the most important export area: Europe. The biggest businesses were strongly international as three quarters of the human resource was situated abroad and 90 % of the revenue made in foreign countries. The biggest partner countries were Sweden, USA, Germany and the Netherlands. (Sarkki 2014, 156-157.)

3.1.2 Team Finland Organisations

When considering moving on to international business fields in the 21st century, Finnish entrepreneurs and companies have a strong Team Finland support network offering information, advice, funding, connections and visibility. The Team Finland agenda is to promote Finnish companies, to bring together all of the state-funded actors and the services they offer to promote internationalization of Finnish companies, to attract foreign investments to Finland and to promote Finland's country brand. (Team Finland 2015 a.)

The highest agents of Team Finland network are the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Culture, all of which have their own administrative branches operating under their guidance.

Finpro, Tekes, Finnvera, Finnish Industry Investment, the ELY Centres and the Finnish-Russian and the Finnish-Swedish Chambers of Commerce are all included in the administrative branch of the Ministry of Employment and the Economy (MEE). MEE is responsible for industrial and innovation policy as well as promoting the internationalisation of companies and the acquisition of foreign investments. (Team Finland 2015 b.)

Finpro is divided into three activities: Export Finland, Invest in Finland and Visit Finland. Mission of this public organization is to bring growth to Finland by promoting internationalization, attracting foreign investments and promoting inbound tourism. With over 200 experts in

45 different countries, Finpro also manages national projects such as Cleantech Finland, Future Learning in Finland and FinlandCare. (Team Finland 2015 b.)

Export Finland offers companies expertise in international business by sharing previous success stories, doing market analysis, evaluating company's readiness for internationalization, offering advice and guidance as well as help with networking. (Export Finland 2015.)

Invest in Finland assists international companies in finding business opportunities in Finland and provides all the relevant information and guidance required to establish a business in Finland. Invest in Finland's activity is focused on seven promising fields: cleantech, healthcare and wellbeing, ICT, mining, retail and travel and tourism. (Invest in Finland 2015 b.)

Visit Finland works closely with travel businesses, transport companies and the various regions of Finland in order to attract tourists world wide. Finland Convention Bureau is a part of Visit Finland promoting the country in meetings, incentives, congresses and events (MICE) industry. (Visit Finland 2015 a.) Finland itself is marketed as a unique, non-mainstream holiday destination characterized to be credible, contrasting, creative and cool. The tourism themes of Visit Finland "Silence, Please", "Wild & Free" and Cultural beat are based on core values of the organisation with a target on modern humanists who have already experienced the biggest metropolises and are seeking for something new and different. (Visit Finland 2015 b.)

Tekes is publicly funded expert organisation offering research, innovation and development financing in service and industry sectors as well as in research communities. Every year, Tekes finance circa 1500 businesses research and development projects along with almost 600 public research projects at universities, research institutes and universities of applied sciences. (Tekes 2015.)

State-owned financier and Finland's official Export Credit Agency, Finnvera, offers funding for the start, growth and internationalization of businesses and guarantees against risks arising from export through loans, domestic guarantees, venture capital investments, export credit guarantees and other services associated with the financing of exports. (Finnvera 2015.)

Finnfund and Finnpartnership function under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) financing and providing businesses advisory with a focal point on projects in developing countries (Finnfund 2015). MFA's goal in the Team Finland - network is to attract investments, market international accessibility and co-ordinate branding Finland (Team Finland 2015 b).

3.2 Strategy for the Internationalization of Higher Education Institutions

Finnish Ministry of Education has created a strategy for developing internationalization in higher education institutions in Finland. The internationalization in Finnish higher education institutions has been diminutive, for example, there are not that many international students studying in Finland as there could be and there are many unused opportunities that Finland could use to attract more international students to study in Finland since Finland has an excellent reputation globally, particularly when it comes to the educational field (Ministry of Education 2009, 5).

In the 1990s the hidden theme of the Finnish national higher education policy was the globalization. The policy had a strong emphasis on the importance of the higher education being part of the national innovation strategy that was intended to increase Finland's and Finnish companies' international competitiveness. (Välilä et al 2001, 214). This signifies that the strategy of the Internationalization of higher education institutions for years 2009- 2015 is in a sense a continuation to the existing Finnish national higher education policy and tries to solve the issues that are interrupting the ongoing internationalization and globalization in the higher education institutions.

One of the issues that the Ministry of Education was planning to fix with this strategy was the decreasing numbers of outgoing exchange students and researchers (Ministry of Education 2009, 5). When reviewing Garam's statistics from 2013, it mentions that lately the amount of outgoing exchange students has been increasing. This indicates that the strategy has been successful and inspired students to go for an exchange.

The strategy lists reasons, why Finland should emphasize the internationalization in the higher education institutions. As it is known, Finland is a small country and the resources in every stage are very limited. Particularly international cooperation is one of the best ways to improve the quality of the education, remove overlapping activities and combine Finnish and foreign resources for joint projects. The reason why particularly the higher education institutes are in the highlight to get Finland more internationalized is that they attract highly educated labor force and foreign investments. The network between the Finnish and international higher education institutions promotes the development potential and increases the competitiveness and innovation abilities in the regions. (Ministry of Education 2009,15).

The concrete measurements that the Finnish Ministry of Education planned to put in the action to make the internationalization strategy successful were, for instance, to oversee the establishment of a fixed-term mobility funding for 2010-2015 and support it with 30 million euro during these years. However, the most important measurement by the student's point of

the view was the plan to include a module to support internalization into all degree programmes. The internalization module could be completed with a mobility period or high-quality international courses. (Ministry of Education 2009, 31). This has been visible in Laurea in a way that the student exchange and doing a placement period abroad has been widely advertised to the students and if a student does not have a possibility to leave the country for a long period, he or she could participate to an international course supported by, for instance, the European Union. The other measurements to support Finland's attractiveness were to support the counseling services of the students with non-Finnish background and to support teachers and staff to get more internationalized by offering them language and cultural studies. (Ministry of Education 2009, 31.)

4 International Experience and Employability

The world is getting smaller day by day and this reflects in the working life where the international cooperation is happening all the time. The laborer is expected to understand different cultures and working with people from different backgrounds. (Kontio 2009, 31). However in the researches that are introduced in this chapter shows that this thesis is not necessary true, at least in the Finnish working life. This chapter examines the researches conducted by The Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) and Demos Helsinki. The researches were performed in 2005 and 2013 to review how the Finnish working life views the new group of internationally skilled labor that has been studying part of the degree abroad. In 2005 research there were 716 companies, from private and public sector that answered to the inquiry (Garam 2005, 9). In 2013 research there were 283 companies and 1770 students that answered to the inquiry (Leppänen et al 2013, 27).

In the research by CIMO and Demos Helsinki (2013) it was found out that there is a new group of internationally skilled labor. The special character of this group was the curiosity and interest towards the big questions related to the global world and the open-mindedness, which is particularly helpful to recognize new markets and they are able to do cooperation with people from different backgrounds. Nevertheless, the employers do not yet recognize this new group of internationally skilled labor, and a job applicant usually does not understand his or her potential. However, at the same time, approximately half of the Finnish employers are connecting international know-how that the group has with such attributes as empathy, resilience, problem solving skills, self-consciousness, self-confidence and reliability. These listed attributes are classified as very important factors when the employer is recruiting new workers. (Leppänen et al 2013, 7-8). The results of the study surprised the researchers since the globalization has affected to the Finnish working life lately in multiple ways and still Finnish employers do not see international know-how as essential criteria when it comes to the recruitment (Leppänen et al 2013, 11, 30), even though the attributes that the internationally

skilled labor generally has are listed as important factors when hiring (Leppänen et al 2013, 27).

There are also other types of international know-how than the one gained during the student mobility period, for example, many young people have gained international know-how from the peer groups of the internet (Leppänen et al 2013, 11). One example of this is the online gaming and other special groups that share the same interest and have a dedicated online forum where the enthusiasts around the globe can exchange the information. The internet has made it possible that a person can get internationalized and establish international friendships and know-how without leaving the comfort zone. The basic descriptions of the international know-how are language skills, communication skills and tolerance, but there are also other attributes and skills that are part of the international know-how, but the opinions of them differ (Leppänen et al 2013, 36).

The research by Garam (2005, 30) shows that 21% of the employers thought that good language skills are an important factor in the recruitment, particularly English. Other languages that the employers were underlining were Swedish, Russian and German. Additionally, also knowing a sign language is appreciated in the Finnish working life. Only 3% of the employers were keeping the expertise of the foreign culture extremely important, though the knowledge of the Russian culture were clearly above all when the employers were asked the specific culture the employee should have an expertise (Garam 2005, 32). Particularly the employers of social- and health sector and service sector keep important that an employee is able to cooperate with people from different cultural backgrounds (Garam 2005, 29). In these sectors an employee will meet many customers from different backgrounds daily, so it is understandable that the employers are highlighting this attribute.

The Finnish employers highly doubt the benefits of the students' mobility period. The general viewpoint is that the one does not need to go abroad to gain expertise or knowledge that can be obtained in Finland, unless the job applicant has a particular experience of the field that he or she is applying from abroad. The attitude of the Finnish employers can be viewed as distrust towards the student mobility, but also as acknowledge towards Finnish higher education institutions. (Garam 2005, 35.)

5 Outgoing Student Mobility

The terms "mobile student" or "exchange student" describe a student who has done his or her entire degree, or part of a degree abroad (Saarikallio-Torp & Wiers-Jenssen 2010, 13). Particularly, these days, doing a part of a degree abroad is popular among the students since it is very easy to organize through a home institution or alternatively through an organization

such as CIMO. The motive to study abroad nowadays is rather different what it was in the past. Earlier, Finnish students decided to do their degree abroad since the educational field in Finland was particularly limited. Recently, the motive for doing exchange or a whole degree in abroad is to gain valuable experience, mental growth and internationalization. (Saarikallio-Torp & Wiers-Jenssen 2010, 69.)

Finland is rather a small country and locates in a peripheral position in Europe and thus the international experience and cultural and language skills among the Finnish citizens is an important factor when strengthening economic competitiveness (Saarikallio-Torp & Wiers-Jenssen 2010, 13). One of the strategies to improve these listed factors is to offer students a possibility to experience a student exchange or a placement period abroad. The Finnish state sees student mobility as an important feature and is being highly promoted as a part of the higher education (Saarikallio-Torp & Wiers-Jenssen 2010, 69). A very good example of this is CIMO, an independent agency founded in 1991 that works under The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture providing help to the Finnish exchange students and for those who are planning to do an internship abroad (CIMO 2015 a). Aside of CIMO and other organizations, the higher degree institutions in Finland are very supportive and highly promoting the student exchanges and internships to their students.

5.1 Statistics and Insights on Student Mobility

This chapter reviews the outgoing student mobility statistics from 2013. The statistics are created by CIMO and give an idea to a reader about the situation of the student mobility in Finnish higher education institutions. It is also good to mention that in Finland, the student mobility generally means doing only a part of the degree abroad as part of the studies in the home country.

Internationality has become a part of the everyday life in Finnish higher education institutions and has integrated Finnish higher education institutions and student unions' ways of acting. As Finland being part of the European Union, it is obvious that Finnish higher education institutions have become part of the larger European entirety. (Juusola 2009, 18.) Nowadays there are plenty of different programmes and organizations that support and motivate the internationalization in Finland and Finnish higher degree students, and doing an exchange or a placement abroad is easier than ever in the history. This reflects in the increasing numbers of the outgoing student mobility and the growing international community in the Finnish higher education institutions.

10 189 students did over three months exchange period abroad in 2013, 5175 from the universities and 5014 from university of applied sciences, when compared to the amount of the de-

gree students in total, every fifth student from university of applied sciences (18%) and every fifth from universities (20%) choose to do part of the degree abroad. (Garam 2014, 3) This indicates that there were no major differences between universities and university of applied sciences in general when it comes to the exchange studies. The amount of the exchange students from the Finnish higher education institutes increased by approximately 200 persons compared to year 2012. The amount of the exchange students going to study abroad has been increasing during the whole 2000s for almost 50%, even though there have been some downturns in the graph (Garam 2014, 5).

From all the universities in Finland, the student mobility is the most active in business economics (from Finland 26%, to Finland 20% from all) and in science and technology (from Finland 17%, to Finland 22% from all). Particularly, from the science and technology field the duration of the exchange period was commonly over three months (Garam 2014, 9), therefore long-lasting exchange periods covering the whole semester. As for university of applied sciences, most active programmes in the matters of the student mobility were business economics and administration degrees (from Finland 32%, to Finland 38% from all). (Garam 2014, 3). However, the most of the students doing the short time exchange periods that are less than three months were from the business informatics degree (Garam 2014, 10). It was found out in the study by Garam that the students that were studying in the Southern Finland were the most enthusiastic to go for an exchange (Garam 2014, 3).

When paying attention to the size of the degree, in universities the most active programmes in student mobility are business economics (32%) and law jurisprudence (28%). As for university of applied sciences, the students of the tourism, catering and economic degrees (51%) are the most eager to do exchange studies abroad. (Garam 2014, 3.)

Even though the overall percentage of the student mobility to Europe has been decreasing, still 65% of the exchange students chose to do their exchange in Europe and all countries in top four are located in the Western Europe; Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom and Sweden. (Garam 2014, 4). The popular non- Western European countries among the exchange students are, for example, Russia, the United States, China, Canada, South Korea and Japan. The study by Garam addressed that the twenty most popular destination countries dealt 84% of the outgoing student exchange from Finland. (Garam 2014, 20.)

5.2 Students Exchange Organisations

There are many organizations, programmes and institutions that supporting the students to experience the student exchange. This chapter is introducing a few of them, particularly giving consideration to ones that are helping the Finnish exchange students, before and during

their student exchange period. The organizations and programmes being focused on this chapter are Erasmus programmes that are supported by the European Union and CIMO that is helping and providing scholarships to Finnish students.

The other bigger mobility channels are bilateral agreements between the higher education institutes, free mover - agreements where the student himself finds the exchange institution and Nordplus programme that deals the exchange students in the Nordic and in the Baltic region. These mentioned sectors were dealing 90% of the student exchanges in 2013. (Garam 2014, 3). Additionally, a Finnish exchange student who is planning to accomplish the exchange period as part of the higher education degree studies and the exchange period is over eight weeks is entitled to get raised student allowance from the Social Insurance Institution of Finland. (Kansaneläkelaitos 2015).

5.2.1 Erasmus programmes

Erasmus, the European Union's student mobility programme is the biggest mobility arrangement in Finland, and it is responsible for half the students (53%) going abroad in 2013. However, amount of students doing an exchange through Erasmus has been increasing, but in recent years the amount of arriving exchange students through the Erasmus programme has been decreasing since the mobility from the Asian countries has been increasing. (Garam 2014, 3). The Erasmus funds all kinds of mobility including short-term sub-Bachelor, Bachelor and Master as well as PhD programmes (Wächter 2012, 15).

The Erasmus programme is the first European-level mobility target found in 1989 by the European Union (Wächter 2012, 16) and even now it is clearly the largest mobility target nowadays in Europe (CIMO 2015 b). The main objectives of the Erasmus programme were to increase the quality of the mobility and the amount of the participants in Europe; to develop and increase partnerships and cooperation among the higher institutions and between the companies; the realization of the European Higher Education Area; to develop advancement of innovation creation; to increase the transparency and acknowledgement of the degrees and qualifications; to increase the mutual academic acknowledgement of the grades and transcript of records; and to help forward to increase the benefits of the information technology in education. (CIMO 2015 b).

For long, the European Union was mainly focusing on the undergraduate students and the mobility between the European countries (Wächter 2012, 15), but in 2009 Erasmus Mundus was founded to promote mobility of students, doctoral candidates, teachers, researchers and university staff from all over the world (EACEA- Erasmus Mundus Programme 2013). However, the Erasmus Mundus programme was put down in 2013 when the Erasmus+ programme was estab-

lished (CIMO 2015 c). The main inspiration to launch the Erasmus Mundus was the globalization that had become part of the daily lives in the Europe as well as in the other parts of the globe. Heretofore the Erasmus Mundus programme was the largest scheme to be open to all countries (Wächter 2012, 14) and most of the actions of the Erasmus Mundus programme continues in the Erasmus+ programme that is successor for the Erasmus and Erasmus Mundus programmes (CIMO 2015 c).

Erasmus+ is a continuation programme for Erasmus to provide support for the mobility students and staff for the years 2014 to 2020). During the seven years when the Erasmus+ programme is active, the European Union will support the studying, training, youth sport and volunteering abroad for 14, 7 billion euros. (the European Union, 2013). One of the aims of Erasmus+ programme is to develop strategic partnerships between educational institutions and youth organizations in the European Union and European Economic Area (Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein) and Turkey and the Republic of Macedonia. Compared to the old programme, Erasmus, Erasmus+ has a few new goals such as supporting partnerships and mobility between European and non-European countries. (CIMO 2015 d.)

5.2.2 The Centre for International Mobility

The Centre for International Mobility, CIMO for short is an independent agency under The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture offering expertise and services on international mobility and cooperation. The aim of CIMO is to promote internationalization of Finnish society, particularly for young people through education, training, working life and culture. The other goals that CIMO works on are, for example, preventing polarization in the society and encouraging global responsibility. (CIMO 2014 a.) CIMO works as Finland's national agency for the European Union's education, training and youth programme Erasmus+ (CIMO 2014) and Nordplus that is the Nordic Council of Ministers' programme of lifelong learning (CIMO 2015 e). Statistics from the year 2014 tell that CIMO sponsored 34, 7 million euros for the scholarships and had approximately 22 500 participants in their projects. The annual budget in 2014 was circa 45 million euros, meaning that approximately 77% of the budget was distributed to grants and subsidies. (CIMO 2015 a.)

5.3 Job Placement Abroad

A student has a possibility to do one of the mandatory placement periods abroad. This is a good alternative to an exchange period. The placement abroad offers the same positive benefits as the exchange period such as personal growth and maturity (Batey & Lupi 2015, 1), international experience and to improve language skills. Additionally, during the placement

period the student can self-examine what he or she is good at and what kind of work will interest the student in the future (CIMO 2014 b).

Generally the student who is planning to do the placement period abroad needs to be self-imposed since the traineeships are most often arranged independently (Pohjola 2015 b). As for the exchange studies, there are also support organizations, for example, Erasmus+ and CIMO that the student can get support and assistance for the placement period (CIMO 2014 b). There are also other international non-profit organizations that help students to find a placement abroad such as AIESEC and Nordjobb.

Commonly the placement period is performed during the degree, but there is a possibility in some higher education institutions that the student does the placement period after the graduation. The placement period can be either only a few weeks long or it can even last over a year. Nevertheless, the most common length of the placement period is three months. (CIMO 2014 b.)

Doing a placement period in a local company in the host country creates a student an opportunity to be part of the local society and everyday life. Student as well learns to cooperate with peoples from other cultures, particularly from the host country and gain new insights and expand the picture of the world. When working and living in unfamiliar circumstances, far away from the one's comfort zone, the student becomes aware of his or her strengths and weaknesses and learns to adapt to challenging situations without the help of the family and friends. Student has also a chance to compare the working environment and the habits between the host country and the home country and think, could the similar companies of the home learn something from the host country's working life and vice versa. (Batey & Lupi 2015, 1-2.)

5.3.1 Nordjobb

There are also other alternative ways to apply to work abroad than higher education institution's own placement periods. One of the alternatives is Nordjobb that offers summertime work, apartments and free-time activities to 18 -28 year-old Nordic citizens (Nordjobb 2015 a). The main goals of Nordjobb are to improve the international mobility of Nordic labor force; support the learning of Nordic languages, particularly Swedish, Norwegian and Danish; and to encourage Nordic citizen to get familiar with other Nordic cultures. (Nordjobb 2015 b.)

Nordjobb is established in 1985 and mainly financed by the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Nordic governments and the Norden associations (Nordjobb 2015 b). Nordjobb is a non-profit organization that helps the Nordic employers to recruit short-time workers from other Nordic

nations; Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Iceland and the autonomous regions of these countries. The programme is free of charge for both, job applicants and contractors. Nordjobb have helped approximately 25.000 young job applicants to find a job in the other Nordic nation during its existence. (Nordjobb 2015 c.)

There are two ways to make Nordjobb useful, the first way is to register and send the curriculum vitae to Nordjobb and wait that they contact the job applicant with a job offer. If the job applicant discards the offer, he or she will not be able to seek a job via Nordjobb again (Nordjobb 2015 d). The other way is to apply to a job by oneself and after that register to Nordjobb for housing and free-time activities (Nordjobb 2015 a).

5.3.2 AIESEC

AIESEC is an international, independent, non-political non-profit organization registered in the Netherlands that has interested in leadership, management and world issues (AIESEC annual report 2013-2014, 9, 45). Applying for an AIESEC placement works the same way as applying to a Nordjobb programme; first the applicant registers to AIESEC portal and waits that the organizations find a placement that suits the applicant the best. Unlike Nordjobb, AIESEC charges a small fee from the participants (CIMO 2015 f).

The purpose of AIESEC is to provide youth leadership to the world by offering international placements and global learning environments (AIESEC annual report 2013-2014, 7-9). The organization has 126 youth-run member committees around the globe. The committees manage and deliver youth programmes which are supported by partner organizations, active volunteers and full-time members (AIESEC 2015). The operational funds and budget are decided by the Global Plenary of Member Committees and being financed through Member Committee Contributions (51% in 2014) and global partners through sponsorships, donations and grants (49% in 2014) (AIESEC annual report 2013-2014, 45).

5.4 Mobility process in Laurea University of Applied Sciences

As it was stated in the strategy of the internationalization of higher education institutions, Laurea has included a module to support student's internationalization in all degree programmes. Alongside with the actual student mobility, Laurea offers possibilities for the internationalization at home by providing foreign language studies, different intensive international themed study units, international tutoring and international projects where students are able to participate. (Pohjola 2015, a.)

The student exchange lasts three to 12 months and the primality to Laurea's own Erasmus, Nordplus or bilateral partnership institutions (Majakulma 2014). Laurea University of Applied Sciences has approximately 240 partner organizations all over the globe (Pohjola 2015, a), but if a student does not find interesting place to do an exchange or a placement among the Laurea partners, the student can also search a host university or a placement by oneself. This is referred as "a free mover exchange" (Majakulma 2014). Particularly, the traineeships are usually arranged independently by the student (Pohjola 2015, b).

The requirements to participate Laurea's mobility programmes are that the student has completed 60 credits worth of studying before applying, meaning that the student mobility is not possible for the first year students. The most common period to do student mobility is during the second year of the studies. (Laurea 2015). The other requirements for the mobility programs are decent language skills that the student is able to survive in different situations that might occur during the mobility period; the student should also be flexible, accept the diversity and has decent interaction skills; and desire and knowledge to promote Finland and Laurea in the destination country (Pohjola 2015, c).

A student does not need to pay any tuition fees in the host university, but the student is responsible of paying the traveling, accommodation and other personal fees during and before the exchange or a placement (Laurea 2015).

Following chapters will discuss about the mobility process in Laurea in detail; from the idea to apply for a mobility period to what happens after the mobility period.

5.4.1 Motivation to Participate in a Mobility Period

Motivation is a concept that explains the actions of people. The essential question related to the motivation is to figure out if some things push people to take an action or does something attract people to do something (Salmela-Aro & Nurmi 2002, 6). The purpose of this chapter is to explain the reasons to go for an exchange or doing an internship abroad.

As it was mentioned in the earlier chapters, the motivation to go for an exchange has been changed from the past. Due to high unemployment numbers, that Finland is suffering currently, the young people are searching for possible tools for the competences and have started to build up their portfolio for the international and domestic labor markets in the early stages of the higher education studies (Noorda 2012, 17).

Spending a semester or even a year abroad, outside of one's the comfort zone improves the mental growth and understanding of global responsibility as an individual (Ministry of

Education 2009, 17). Additionally, living abroad particularly develops young person's independence and the other possible skills that adulthood requires such as taking care of oneself.

There are also other, simpler reasons to have a year or a semester long student mobility experience abroad, such as, meeting new people and establish new friendships with other students and colleagues from all over the world. The other motivation factors to a mobility period are to practice already known languages and learn new ones; to gain deeper knowledge of the local culture in the destination country and to participate to the cultural events; and sometimes the reason might be as simple as to be able to travel and see the world. (Fähnrich 2009).

Even though, by the author's own experience, one of the biggest motivating factors for the mobility period is the monetary support by Erasmus and other organizations and the easiness to apply for a mobility period. An average income per month for a higher degree student in Finland is 821 euros (Saarenmaa, Saari & Virtanen 2010, 4), which means that most of the Finnish higher degree students are living below the poverty threshold that was 1170 euros per month in 2014 (Taloussanomat 2014). Therefore, it is obvious that without the monetary support from the European Union, Social Insurance Institution of Finland and other possible scholarships, going to perform part of the degree abroad would be just a dream for many Finnish higher degree students.

5.4.2 Preparation for a Mobility Period

Key to good preparation is the planning and information seeking. Before going abroad, student should organize moving, funding, health and official businesses with school as well as with the state. Exchange studies are dealt with the home and host university, and placements with the employer and home university. It is best to have contract of employment for the placement ready before departure in case of legal problems. The passport should be valid during the entire time abroad and residential- or work permits applied if required in the host destination. Keep all of the travel documents with you and take several copies of them. Notification of emigration has to be sent to Social Insurance Institution of Finland and the magistrate. Health includes needed vaccinations, prescriptions and doctors' orders. (CIMO 2015 g) Laurea recommends that the planning of the possible mobility is started in the beginning of the studies with the help of the tutor teacher and the International Office (Majakulma 2014).

The first step of the preparation is to book an appointment with an international coordinator. During the meeting, the student can discuss the possible options with the coordinator and

gain additional information about the upcoming exchange or placement period. When the host institution or a placement is found, the student should consult his or her tutor teacher if the host institution or placement is supporting the degree programme that the student is studying. (Pohjola 2015 c). Also, the information about the student mobility is available for Laurea students on Laurea Live and SoleMove that are the platforms that Laurea uses for informing the students. Furthermore, it is also important to check the current atmosphere of the destination country from Finnish Foreign Ministry news to be sure there are no conflicts or other things that might put student to a danger (Pohjola 2015 c).

After the student has discussed about the necessary formalities and has solid plans for the exchange or placement period, the student is ready to apply for the student mobility via SoleMove platform. The application period is twice a year, in February and in September. The International Office organizes a few information sessions before the application period starts to make sure that the upcoming exchange students and trainees are well informed. Alongside with the application itself, the student must attach a motivation letter where the international coordinators can examine the student's professional motivation and what are the student's expectations for the mobility period. The other document that must be attached to the application is the preliminary Learning Agreement where the possible courses of the host institution are listed. The Learning Agreement can be changed when the host university has published the new courses or if the student decides to quit or add new course to the study plans during the exchange period. The Learning Agreement for traineeships is for the students that are doing a placement abroad. When the application has been sent, the student will be invited to the interview that together with the application has influence if the student is accepted to the mobility programme. (Pohjola 2015, c). However, it is important to note that acceptance of the application does not ensure that the exchange or a placement is confirmed, but only shows that Laurea has accepted student's exchange or placement plans. After the acceptance from Laurea, the student is able to apply to the host institution with the guidance of the International Office. When the student has got a letter of confirmation from the host institution, the student may apply for Laurea University of Applied Sciences' grant. The amount of a grant is depending on a destination country. The student receives 80% of the grant before the mobility and rest 20% after the mobility when all the necessary paper work has been done. (Pohjola 2015, c.)

Before the student mobility period starts, a student needs to participate to an orientation course "Going Abroad" organized by the International Office. The course is worth of 3 credits and the preparatory studies are recommended to be completed before the student mobility period starts. If the student is doing an exchange via Erasmus+, the student must take the Online Linguistic Support- language test (OLS) before and after the exchange. (Pohjola 2015, c). OLS language test is mandatory for all Erasmus + participants that are attending to a

mobility period that lasts over two months. The languages that the OLS supports are English, German, Spanish, French, Italian and Dutch. (The European Union 2015.)

A good time before the exchange period, a student is responsible to organize all needed travel documents and insurances independently. A student going to a country that is part of the European Union will only need a residence permit if the exchange or a placement period is over three months and the host institution requires it. (Pohjola 2015 c). If a student is going to another Nordic country, there is no need for a residence permit or a work permit. The author was doing her exchange in Iceland, where custom is that a person who is from the European Economic Area or the European Union has a right to be in a country for six months, if he or she is looking for a job. (Norden 2015.) Therefore, no documents needed to fill since it is difficult to prove if someone was looking for a job or not.

The host institution commonly helps an exchange student to find an accommodation, and the student should know the address of the new temporary home before departing to a destination country (Pohjola 2015 c). Nevertheless, it is not rare that a student spends the first weeks of the exchange period in a hotel or a hostel while looking for an apartment independently or with a help of a host institution. A student doing a placement abroad often needs to arrange the accommodation by oneself (Pohjola 2015 c).

5.4.3 Living and Studying Abroad

Living abroad requires getting used to a new way of experiencing every-day-life. Things that have become customary in Finland seem odd elsewhere and vice versa. It is important to get to know the new environment and enjoy the experience. The student should also not forget that he or she is seen as an ambassador of Finland to people who know nothing of the country. (CIMO 2015 h.)

One of the authors did her exchange period in Bifröst University, Iceland as part of an Erasmus+ programme. As being a Finnish citizen going to another Nordic country, there was no need to any particular paper work before leaving or during the stay since a person from another Nordic country does not need residence or work permit and in Iceland, a person from the European Union or the European Economic Area can be in a country legally six month if looking for a job. However, normally a citizen of the European Union or European Economic Area can be staying legally, without residence or a work permit in another European Union or European Economic Area country three months. (Norden 2015).

When the author first arrived to the campus area of Bifröst University that is located in Borgarbyggð municipality in Western Iceland, the international coordinator of the university

guided the author to the new home and after getting settled down the other formalities, such as getting an internet access and showing around the campus was done. During the first weeks of the exchange period, there was some orientation and other activities to exchange students to get comfortable with the new daily routines.

The mobility student should figure out during the early stages of the mobility period if he or she needs to, for example, open a bank account and telephone subscription in the destination country. Furthermore, depending on a destination country, there might be other official paper work that needs to be done early as possible, such as a visa registration. (CIMO 2015 i.)

During the mobility period, a student might experience anxiety and major problems such as, language related issues, financial difficulties, loneliness and isolation, and discrimination and insufficiency in personal safety (Beerkens 2012, 90). Additionally, a student might experience a culture shock when arriving to a new country and spending a long time outside of the home community. A culture shock is not necessarily a bad thing and indicates that the student is involved with the local culture. A new culture might also cause stress to the exchange student. The international coordinators of Laurea have created a support forum on Optima workspace that is used as a platform for the course materials. From the forum the mobility students can get peer support from other current mobility students. (Pohjola d.)

Nowadays, when the social media is in everyone's reach, many mobility students start their own blogs where they tell about their experiences in the host country (CIMO 2015 i). There might be also a group in, for instance, Facebook where the mobility student can meet other Finnish people that are living or staying a longer period in the destination country. The author as well, joined a Facebook group that was meant for the Finnish people living in Iceland, and got a friend with another Finnish exchange student from Akureyri University.

During the exchange, the student is responsible to make write down the changes and update the Learning Agreement if needed and do the tasks of the "Going Abroad" course that needed to be done during the exchange period. Moreover, it is important also to keep contact with the personal international coordinator of the home institution and keep him or her updated about the current situation in the host institution. At the end of a mobility period, the student should ask a Transcript of Records from the host institution that shows the credits or ECTS points gained and the local grades. The students that did the placement abroad should get a recommendation letter or a traineeship certificate. (Pohjola 2015 d.)

5.4.4 Returning from a Mobility Period

The formal part of returning includes dealing with official businesses with the state and the school: handing in notifications, certificates, reports and taking part in return orientation are all a part of the process. The student should give a thought what he or she has learned during the mobility time and make the most of it in the future. (CIMO 2015 j.)

After the student has returned back to the home country, the student needs to fill "After Exchange"- report and if the student was part of Erasmus+ programme, a separate form from the European Commission must be filled as well. The remaining task of the "Going Abroad"-course must also be completed before getting rest of the Laurea University of Applied Sciences grant. The next step is to contact the tutor teacher and make an appointment to negotiate how the credits of the mobility period will be included in the study plan and what mandatory courses the student can replace with the courses the student did during the mobility period. If the student did a placement abroad, the placement will be recognized in the same way as the placement period in Finland. (Pohjola 2015 d.)

Laurea University of Applied Sciences organizes the return orientation for the students that have recently finished their mobility period and a student has possibility to share his or her experience to the other students, for instance, during the International day. (Pohjola 2015 d).

Spending a long time outside of the home country might cause a reverse culture shock (Pohjola 2015 d). The author did experience a culture shock when arriving to a destination country, but had a minor reverse culture shock after returning to Finland. Since there are barely any big buildings or urban noise in Icelandic countryside or even in the capital Reykjavik, the big buildings and the noise of Helsinki felt disturbing.

6 Research Method and Conduction

The empirical part of the thesis was conducted using a quantitative, or in other words, statistical, research method. The quantitative study revolves around numbers and percentages offering information on dependencies and changes in the phenomenon. Research requires a sample large and representative enough to give a reliable result (Heikkilä 2004, 16).

The core of the research was survey-based secondary data provided by the commissioner of the thesis, the International Office of Laurea. The Survey is regularly collected among all returning students who have taken part in international student mobility and stayed abroad minimum three-month period. Continuous, regular surveys give comparative results as data is collected at fixed intervals (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 250). In total, Laurea had 762 exchange students in 2013 and 2014. From these 762 students, 552 were minimum 3 months in length and included in the survey sample. Even though the survey is compulsory for all the

returning students, the response rate was circa 77 % meaning that a sample of 425 respondents who had spend at least three months abroad in 2013-14 as a part of their studies, was assessed.

The first step of this thesis process in May 2015 was deciding on a subject. Both of the authors have included exchange periods in their studies and student mobility felt like a good starting point. After contacting the Laurea UAS International Affairs Office and discussing the idea, the theme became precise: Student Satisfaction Analysis using data collected by the International Office. Analysing already existing data was beneficial for both parties as response rate was high and gave reliable results to analyse and the International Office received new information on their processes.

The planning started with a concrete research problem and three to five key words that would represent the theme as accurately as possible thus outlining the topic. The core of the research problem was developing International Office services by finding out how satisfied the mobility students were with the international experience and what can be done to better the services already provided. The chosen key words were Internationalization, Student Mobility, Exchange, Satisfaction and Job Placement. The key words describe the theme of the thesis accurately yet throughoutly giving the reader a clear perception of the contents already in the beginning.

As the study targets Laurea and its students, a research permit was required. The permit proved to be challenging to obtain as the application had to include not only the names of the authors, project name and timeline, objectives of the research, previous theory references and phases of the project but also the base of the quetionnaire and a project plan consisting of all the things mentioned above as well as very detailed information on the amount of respondents and the exact time when the data was collected. The application was finally processed and the premit granted in June 2015 just as the summer holidays had started, which delayed receiving the data further until August 2015. In the mean time, research and planning of relevant theory and reference material supporting the study was in the focus.

After receiving the data, it was important to familiarize with the material and decide how to examine it most efficiently and in a reliable manner. The questions relevant for the mobility satisfaction were picked out from the questionnaire and analyzed. The authors decided to focus on questions revolving around motivation and preparation, evaluation of the host institution or organization, cultural aspects and social interaction as well as evaluation of the mobility outcomes.

In order to find irregularities and further dependencies in mobility satisfaction, cross tabulation of the sample in terms of mobility outcomes was performed. Cross tabulation is used for analyzing and understanding relationships between variables, their nature and need for further analysis (Tähtinen, Laakkonen & Broberg 2011, 123). The chosen three variables were mobility destination, type and programme.

At the end of the process, the results and conclusions based on the data were presented to representatives of Laurea International Office with development suggestions.

7 Results

The first chapters of the results present respondents' opinions on mobility experience as a whole. The theme progresses in chronological order beginning from the motivation and preparation for the mobility period. The next areas of interest are studies and work recognition while staying abroad and finally, the overall satisfaction upon returning. Furthermore, the latter chapters focus on cross tabulation of the satisfaction upon returning. The cross tabulation is based on three types of variables: destination of the mobility, type of mobility, that is whether the student was studying abroad, carrying out his/hers job placement or both, and exchange programme.

7.1 Throughout Evaluation

This chapter focuses on evaluation of the questions contributing to the mobility experience as a whole hence having a major impact on overall satisfaction. The questionnaire was narrowed down in order to keep a clear topic throughout and avoiding unnecessary information. The entire questionnaire can be found in the appendix.

7.1.1 Motivation and Preparation for Mobility Period

In order to gain more information on student's satisfaction of the mobility experience, it is important to take a look into the motivation of the students and see whether the goals set before the exchange period were matched upon returning. The first part of the questionnaire includes six questions focusing on the theme "Motivation and preparation for Mobility Period".

The first question inquired the importance of various factors in the decision to study or train abroad. The question was set in a Likert scale as the options ranged from question mark, meaning not applicable, to 1-Not important, and 5 which meant that the factor was very important. Last factor was marked as "other" and if the respondent decided to choose that,

specification was required in the form of an open question. The factors used and their average values are portrayed in the table below.

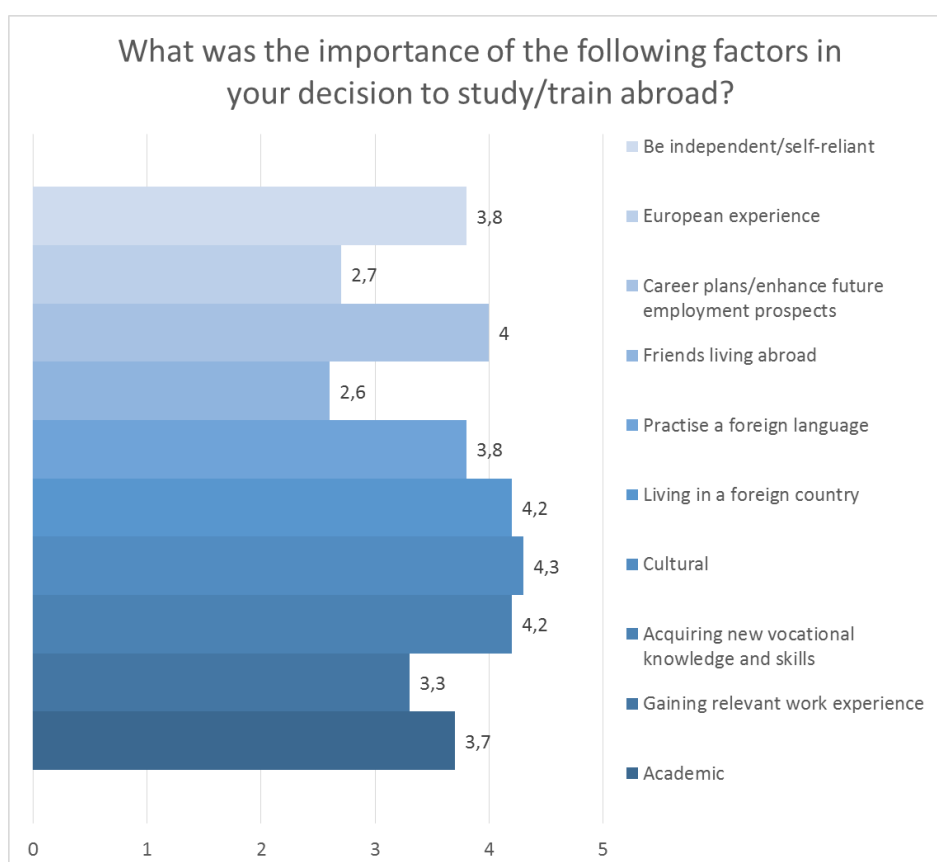


Table 1. Motivational factors. (Laurea Statistics 2013-14.)

As the table 1 shows, the most important motivational factors to study abroad are cultural (4,3), Acquiring new vocational knowledge (4,2) and Living in a foreign country (4,2). Other high scoring motives were: being independent or self-reliant (3,8), career plans/enhancing future employment prospects (4), practising a foreign language (3,8) and academic reasons (3,7) whereas european experience (2,7), friends living abroad (2,6) and gaining relevant work experience (3,3) did not score highly. Alongside with the motivational factors above, most popular reasons to go on exchange in the open question part were travelling potential of the destination, other personal interests, charity, hobbies and challenging ones self.

The next question was another open question about the reasons behind choosing a particular host country or institutions. It appears that host country was more of a key factor than the institution itself, although there were a few exceptions if the intitution offered special courses not available elsewhere. Most common reasons to go to a spesific country were personal interest in the culture or language of the destination.

Social interaction with other exchange students or trainees is crucial as the culture shock and new environment with its own challenges are easier to conquer when experienced and shared with others at the same situation. As the results of the next question, were there any other special event organized for exchange students/trainees at the host institution during your stay, indicate, circa 57 % of the 425 student abroad had special events organized for the exchange students at the host institution during their stay.

As the theory confirms, information seeking and planning are keys to good preparation. In order to developed institutions' information sources, it is crucial to know which channels are seen most efficient and helpful from student's point of view. The next question sheds light on how helpful the following home as well as host institution services and information sources were both before and during the mobility. The options and their averages on a 1-5 scale are presented in the tables below.

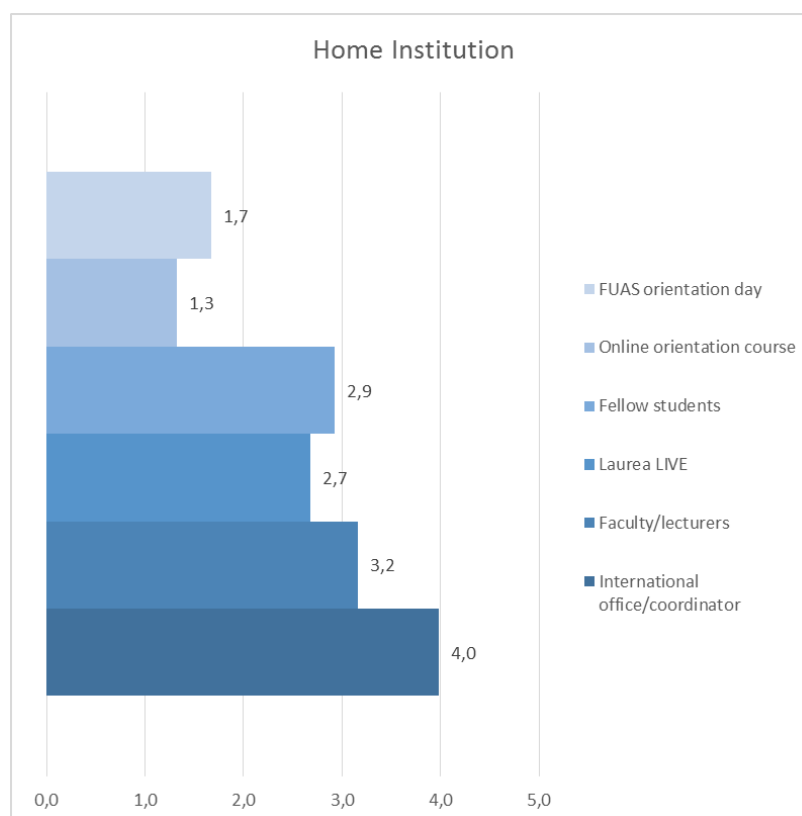


Table 2. Helpfulness of the Home Institution. (Laurea Statistics 2013-14.)

As the table 2 shows, the most useful information source is the international office and the coordinators (4,0). A support person with adequate knowledge of the subject is crucial for students facing new challenges on their own. Another much appreciated source were the faculty and the lecturers (3,2) as well as fellow students (2,9) with their personal experience.

The lowest scoring sources were FUAS orientations day (1,7) and online orientation course (1,3).

Federation of Universities of Applied Sciences (FUAS) is a strategic alliance formed by Häme University of Applied Sciences, Lahti University of Applied Sciences and Laurea (FUAS 2015 a). FUAS organizes a joint orientation day for students going on student exchange or work placement annually. The programme includes practical information, insights on meeting new cultures, health and safety issues abroad and various discussions in small groups on the basis of mobility destination (FUAS 2015 b).

Online Orientation Course means a preparatory Going Abroad-course which is worth 3 ect credits and compulsory for all long-term exchange students and highly recommended for all those doing a job placement abroad. The aim of the course is to make sure that students are able to work successfully in a foreign country's learning environment. The course includes processing cultural encounters and familiarizing with the destination country and higher education institution as well as Finnish culture and education system. Practical arrangements concerning the exchange are also a part of the study.

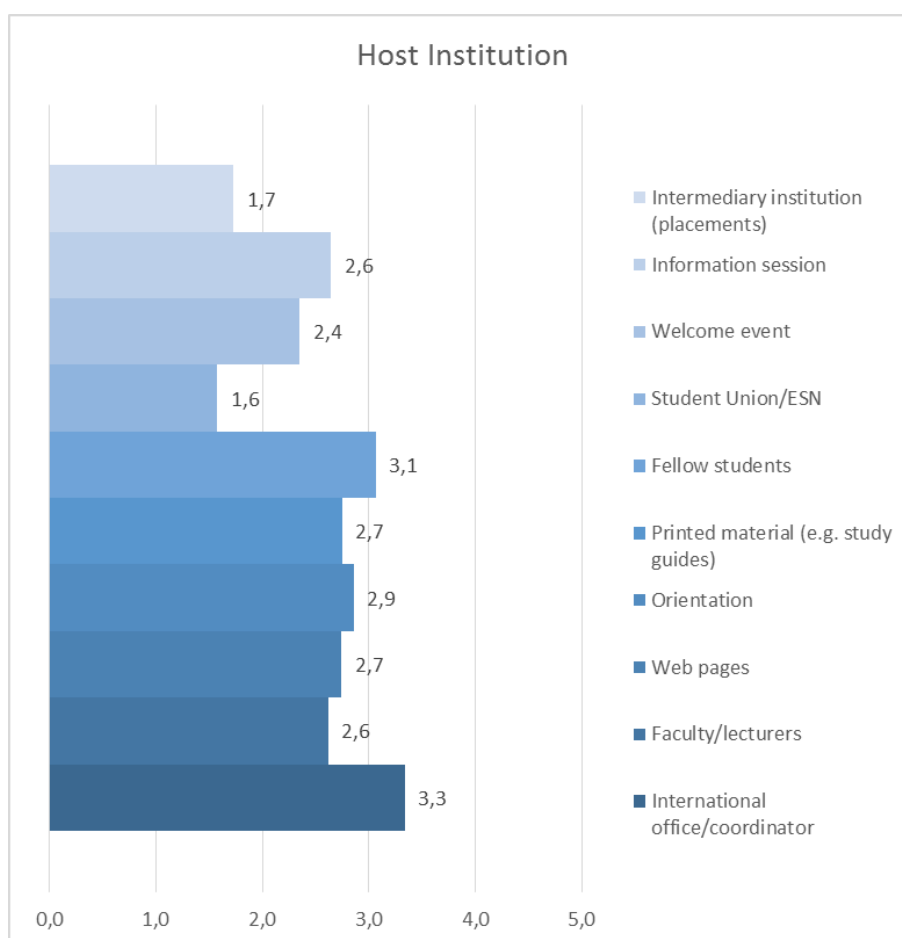


Table 3. Helpfulness of the Host Institution. (Laurea Statistics 2013-14.)

Along similar lines to Laurea, International office and coordinator (3,3) at the destination were seen as most helpful despite the fact that they did not score as highly as the home institution equivalents. Other useful sources were fellow students (3,1) and, opposed to home institution, orientation (2,9).

Information session (2,6), welcome event (2,4), printed material (2,9), web pages (2,7) and faculty and lecturers (2,6) all fall in the middle-ground of the scale while intermediary institutions (1,7) in case of placements and student unions (1,6) were seen as least helpful.

The research included only mobility periods longer than 3 months, but after that, exchange periods vary greatly. Exchange students usually spend 1-2 semesters abroad and depending on the labor contract, trainees stay abroad minimum 3 months. As the Table 4. shows, when asked how satisfied students were with the duration of the mobility 1 % did not see the question applicable, 22 % thought their time abroad to be too short and 74 % saw it as just right where as 3 % found their time abroad to be too long.

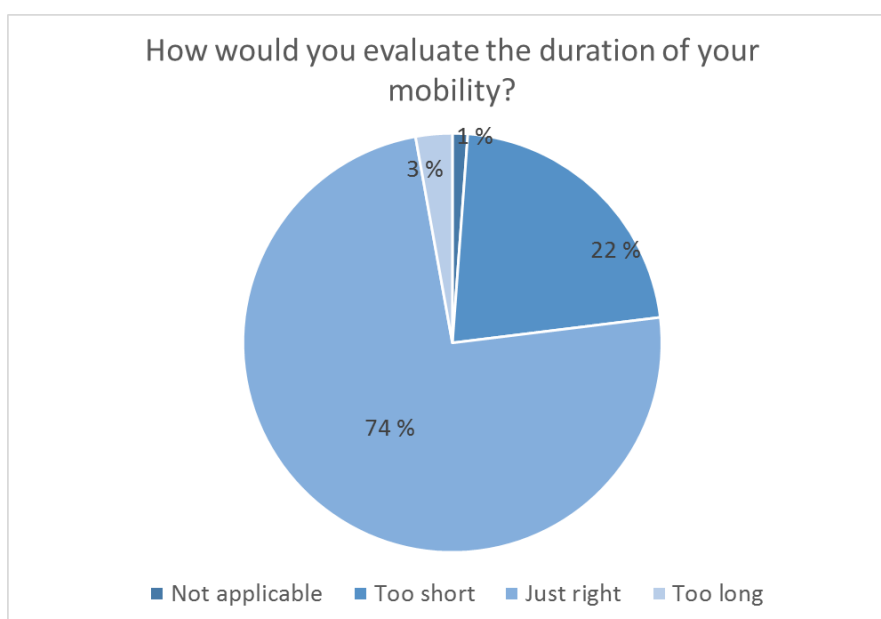


Table 4. Evaluation of the Mobility Duration. (Laurea Statistics 2013-14.)

The question was set in Likert scale varying from ?- not applicable to 1- too short, 2- just right and 3- too long. Instead of average values, the results are best presented in percentages as it shows the values more precisely.

7.1.2 Studies and Work Recognition

The theme "Studies and Work Recognition included questions revolving around experiences at the host institution or work placement.

The first question asked the exchange students opinion on the courses and infrastructure at the host institution. The results are presented with options and their average values in table 5. Due to the fact that the neutral option, in this case chosen by most of the trainees as they did not include studies in their mobility period, was marked as a zero in the results thus affecting negatively on the average, all of the trainees were excluded from the question.

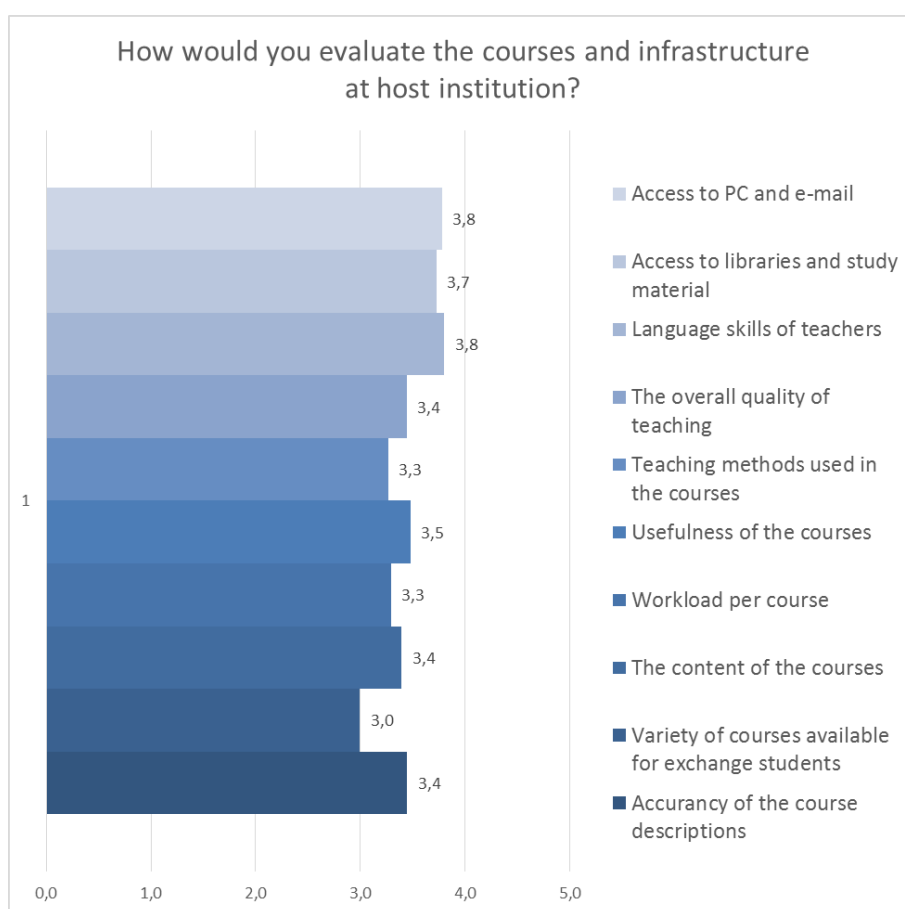


Table 5. Courses and Infrastructure at Host Institution. (Laurea Statistics 2013-14.)

The aspects most appreciated by the students were access to PC and e-mail (3,8) as well as language skills of the teachers (3,8). Access to libraries and study materials (3,7) were also seen in a relatively positive light. The overall quality of teaching, teaching methods of the courses, usefulness of the courses, workload per course and the accuracy of the course descriptions all fall in the same category settling at scores between 3,3 and 2,5. As the table 5 shows, the most dysfunctional part of the studies was variety of courses available for exchange students (3,0).

In total, 344 of the 425 students spending time abroad were studying in a university or university of applied sciences, that is circa 81 % of all taking part in student mobility. From these 81 %, 78 % had their courses at least partially taught in English whereas the remaining 22 % were studying in the local language, which was other than English.

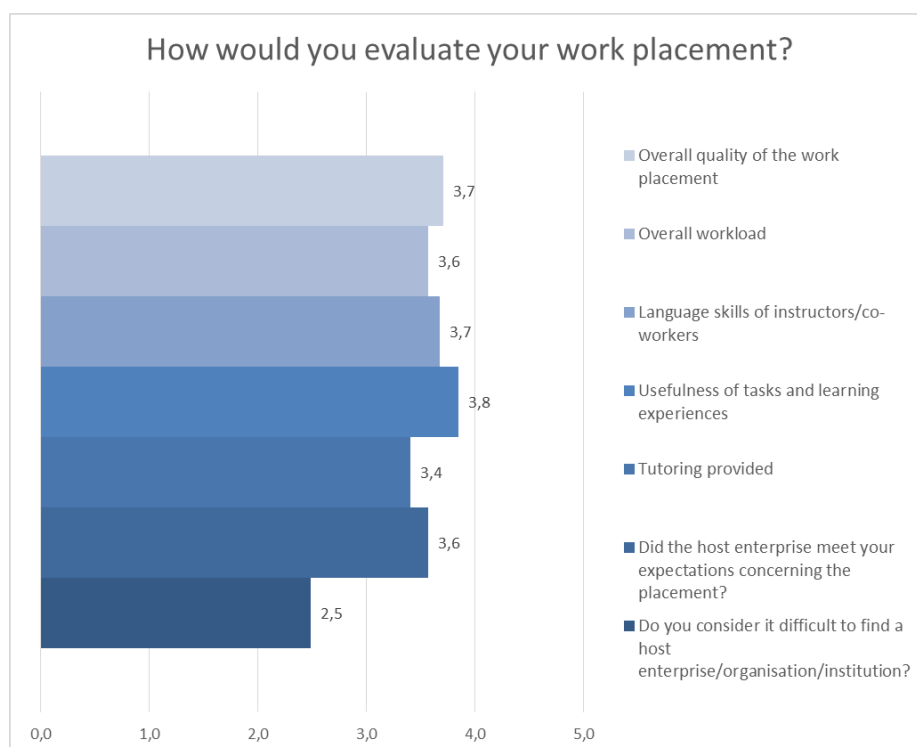


Table 6. Evaluation of the Work Placement. (Laurea Statistics 2013-14.)

In a similar manner with the previous question, all of the exchange students are excluded from the question as it only concern trainees and the neutral answer (0) from students has a negative effect on the averages.

The averages of overall quality of the work placement, overall workload, language skills of the instructors and co-workers, usefulness of the tasks and learning experience as well meeting the expectations draw a unified line as all of the variables score between 3,6 and 3,8. A common problem among trainees seems to be finding the host institution in the first place as the option was the only one scoring on the negative side of the scale.

7.1.3 Cultural Experience and Language

The theme "Cultural Experience and Language" included questions on social interaction and language proficiency.

When asked to define their level of social interactions with other international students at the host institution, local students or employees at the host institution and the local culture or society in general on a scale from 1-5, the highest result came from the local culture and society in general (4,0) as the internationals and locals drew close at 3,6 and 3,5.

From all of the mobility students, 47 % claimed that the host institution offered language courses or modules where as 53 % did not have an opportunity to study languages at the host institution. However, when asked whether or not the students studied the local language, 53 % answered yes and 43 % had not.

7.1.4 Overall Evaluation of the Mobility Period

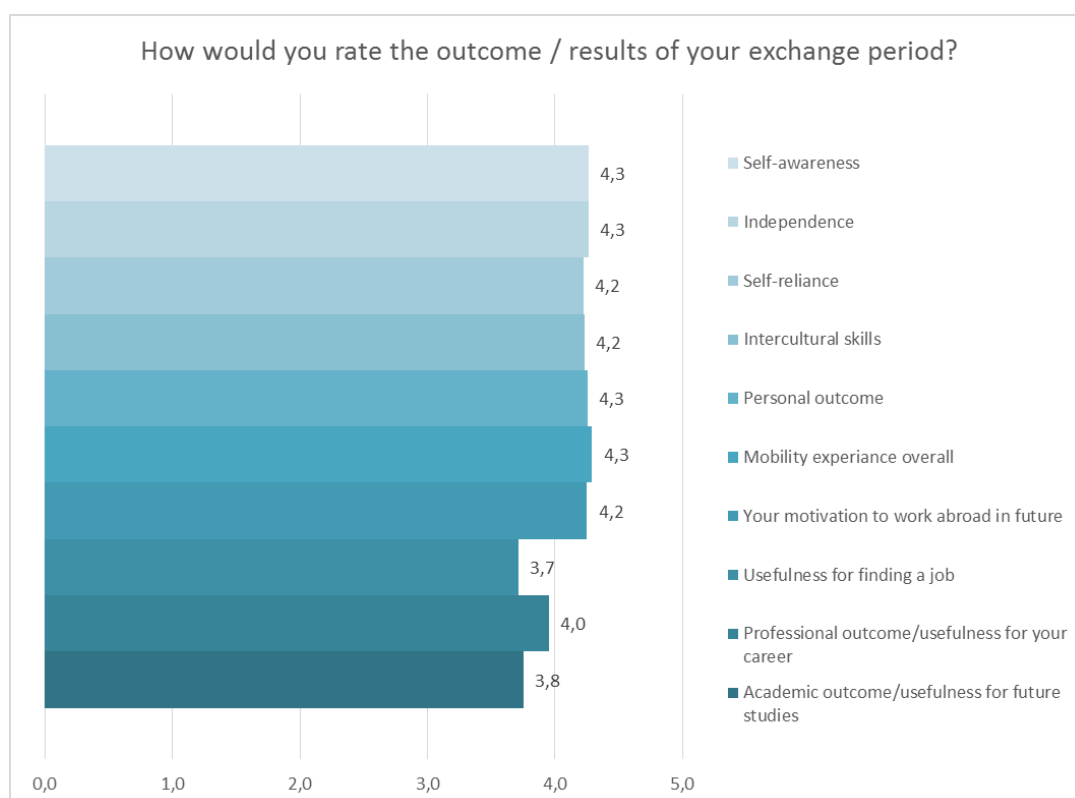


Table 7. Outcome of the Exchange Period. (Laurea Statistics 2013-14.)

As the table shows, majority of students were satisfied with their mobility period as outcomes are rated on the positive side of the scale. Among personal aspects such as intercultural skills and independence the dispersion is not noticeable, whereas usefulness for career and academic studies were rated a bit lower.

The most developed aspects were assessed to be personal outcome, self-awareness, independence and overall mobility experience which all had an average of 4,3. Self-reliance, intercultural skills and motivation to work abroad in the future were also rated above profes-

sional and academic aspects at 4,2. Professional outcome and usefulness for one's career (4,0), Academic outcome and usefulness for future studies (3,8) and usefulness for finding a job (3,7) were thought to have less importance than personal aspects.

In correspondence to motivation, there is a slight conflict between the motivators and results. Even though cultural aspect and being independent were seen as the important motivators, acquiring vocational knowledge and enhancing future employment prospects were seen more relevant than the final outcome implies.

As the theory states, the job applicants, or hereby respondents, do not often understand their own professional potential as employers are yet to discover the new group of internationally skilled labor. However, approximately half of the Finnish employers are connecting international know-how with such attributes as empathy, resilience, problem solving skills, self-consciousness, self-confidence and reliability which are all listed as important attributes when hiring. This finding supports the usefulness of mobility period in future career prospects as well as in finding a job.

Majority of the students did not encounter any serious problems during their mobility period where as 10 % of the students mentioned severe issues. The biggest problems abroad were with health, safety, housing, bureaucracy, emotional life, cultural differences, changing course descriptions, harassment, discrimination, financial or lack of orientation.

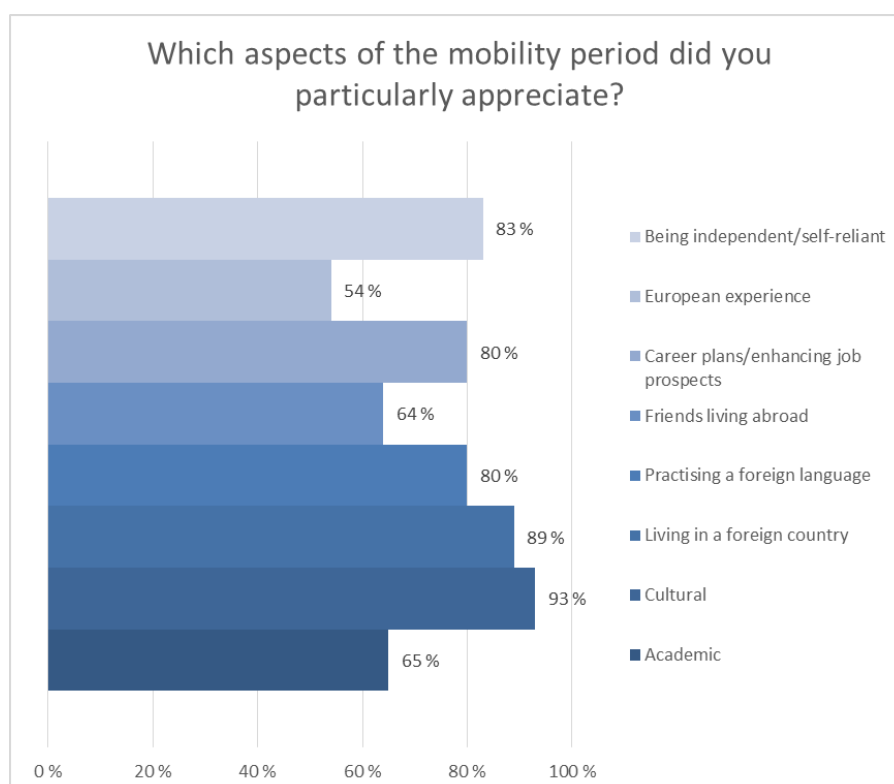


Table 8. Particularly appreciated aspects of the mobility. (Laurea Statistics 2013-14.)

Along similar lines with the motivational factors, cultural aspects (93 %) and living in foreign country (89 %) are the most appreciated by the students. Personal aspects of being independent and self-reliant (83 %) are also seen as highlights of the experience by a majority of students. Career plans and job prospects as well as practising a foreign language were in the focal point of 80 % of the students.

Academic aspects (65 %) and friends living abroad (64 %) were seen as secondary while gathering clearly less interest than previous options. Only 54 % of the students saw European experience as an appreciated factor yet it is important to remember that only 57 % of the mobility periods were done in Europe.

Apart from the ready-made options, respondents were able to give their own opinions on the most appreciated aspects. These included, for example, travelling, experiencing new teaching methods and experiencing a particular culture or living in a specific destination.

7.2 Satisfaction Evaluation by Mobility Destination

In 2013-14 Laurea sent 425 students to over 58 different countries worldwide. As the table 9 shows 57 % of the students chose their destination within Europe the most popular countries being Spain (48 students), United Kingdom (35), Germany (29) and Netherlands (20). According to the theory by Garam from 2014 "the overall percentage of the mobility to Europe has been decreasing, still 65 % of the exchange students chose to do their exchange in Europe and all countries top four are located in the Western Europe; Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom and Sweden". Even though the percentage of students heading for Europe from Laurea was smaller than the national average, it is still clearly the most popular option. Apart from Sweden, which received only 7 Laurea students in 2013-14, the top five countries were accurate.

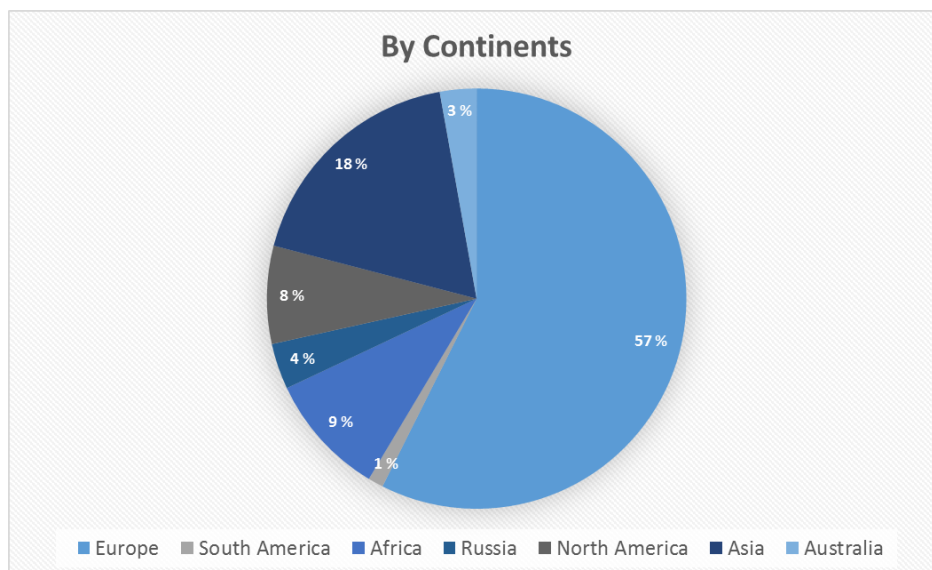


Table 9. Departing Students by Destination Continent. (Laurea Statistics 2013-14.)

As the table 9. shows, another popular continent was Asia with 18 % of the students. China, Indonesia and Japan ended up being the most popular Asian destinations with 12 students each. 9 % of the respondents spend their time abroad in Africa, where the most attractive individual country was Tanzania hosting 16 students from Laurea. North America consisting of USA, Canada and Mexico served as destination to 8 % of the exchange students whereas Australia (3 %), Russia (4%) and South America (1 %) dealt the rest.

The theory suggests that the most common non-Western European destinations were Russia, the United States, China, Canada, South Korea and Japan corresponds in some measure with Laurea´s data as 15 students chose Russia as destination, 12 the United States, 12 China, 7 Canada, 6 South Korea and 12 Japan. Furthermore, Austria (15 students), Denmark (9), France (15), Ghana (7), Indonesia (12), Mexico (9), Thailand (8) and Vietnam (10) were among the more popular countries.

	Academic outcome/usefulness for future studies	Professional outcome/usefulness for your career	Usefulness for finding a job	Motivation to work abroad in future	Mobility experience overall	Personal outcome	Intercultural skills	Self-reliance	Independence	Self-awareness
Austria	4,4	4,1	3,7	4,5	4,7	4,5	4,5	4,2	4,5	4,3
Australia	3,2	3,2	3,0	4,0	3,9	3,5	3,6	3,1	3,6	3,3
Banglade	3,7	4,8	4,3	3,8	4,7	4,8	3,0	4,2	3,8	4,5
Belgium	4,0	4,4	3,0	3,4	3,8	4,4	4,4	3,4	4,2	4,0
Canada	4,4	4,0	4,3	4,7	4,6	4,6	4,6	4,1	4,4	4,4
Switzerla	3,8	4,0	4,2	4,3	4,3	4,3	4,3	4,3	4,3	4,3
China	3,6	4,2	3,8	4,0	4,3	4,1	4,3	4,4	4,5	4,0
Germany	3,8	4,0	3,8	4,4	4,3	4,1	4,4	4,2	4,2	4,0
Denmark	3,6	3,7	3,0	3,6	3,7	3,4	3,9	4,0	4,0	4,2
Spain	3,7	3,9	3,7	4,4	4,4	4,4	4,5	4,5	4,4	4,5
France	3,6	3,7	4,2	4,2	4,3	4,3	4,5	4,3	4,2	4,0
UK	3,9	4,0	3,7	4,3	4,3	4,1	4,2	4,4	4,4	4,3
Ghana	4,4	4,9	4,4	5,0	4,6	4,6	4,9	4,9	4,7	4,6
Greece	3,8	4,2	3,3	4,0	3,5	3,5	4,7	4,7	4,8	4,8
Indonesia	3,6	3,5	3,3	4,4	4,8	4,8	4,5	4,5	4,6	4,4
Italy	3,2	4,0	4,2	4,0	4,4	4,2	3,2	4,0	4,0	3,8
Japan	4,2	3,6	3,3	4,3	4,7	4,8	4,6	4,4	4,6	4,6
South Kor	3,5	2,8	2,3	4,3	4,7	4,7	4,7	4,8	4,8	5,0
Latvia	1,6	2,6	2,4	2,8	3,4	2,4	2,0	1,6	1,6	3,0
Mexico	4,8	4,9	4,3	5,0	4,8	4,8	4,9	4,8	4,8	4,7
Nigeria	3,8	4,4	4,2	4,8	4,2	4,6	4,6	4,6	4,8	4,8
Netherlan	3,8	4,1	3,6	4,0	4,0	4,3	4,0	3,7	3,9	4,0
Nepal	4,3	4,5	3,7	4,5	4,3	4,2	4,3	4,8	4,7	4,3
Portugal	3,0	3,6	3,6	4,4	4,4	3,8	4,2	4,0	4,0	4,2
Russia	3,7	4,3	4,2	4,2	4,5	4,4	4,5	4,5	4,3	4,4
Sweden	4,4	3,7	3,7	4,4	4,4	4,3	3,9	4,0	4,3	4,3
Slovenia	3,0	2,4	2,4	3,0	3,6	3,6	3,4	3,0	3,4	3,2
Thailand	3,4	4,1	3,6	4,0	3,9	4,3	4,4	4,4	4,6	4,9
Tanzania	3,5	4,1	4,1	4,7	4,3	4,6	4,4	4,4	4,3	4,4
United St	3,4	4,3	4,2	4,8	4,6	4,5	4,4	4,1	4,2	4,5
Vietnam	3,4	3,2	3,2	2,8	2,6	3,6	2,6	3,5	3,4	3,6

Table 10. Outcome of the Exchange Period by Destination. (Laurea Statistics 2013-14.)

The table 10. lists the destinations and their average values considering student satisfaction in various aspects. In order to obtain reliable averages from each country, the countries with less than 5 students were ruled out. The countries not included in the table were: Argentina, Barbados, Bulgaria, Brazil, Chile, Cameroon, Czech Republic, Estonia, Gambia, Hong Kong, Croatia, Hungary, Ireland, Iceland, Kenya, Lithuania, Malta, Namibia, Norway, New Zealand, Peru, Poland, Romania, Singapore, Turkey, Taiwan and South Africa.

When looking specifically at the academic outcomes or usefulness for future studies, Mexico has the highest score of 4,8 whereas Latvia has clearly the lowest score being given only 1,6 as average. The countries falling in between present a range from 4,4 to 3,0 yet none come close to the opposite ends.

From a professional outcome or usefulness for your career point of view, Mexico is still at the top of the line alongside with Ghana. Both of the countries have an average of 4,9. The lowest score was 2,4 from Slovenia. When asked how useful the experience was for finding a job, Ghana was still taking the lead with 4,4 and South Korea had the lowest score with 2,3 as an average. Students spending their mobility period in Mexico appear to have the most motivation to work abroad in the future as the average value was 5,0. Students studying or working in Latvia or Vietnam are the least eager with an average of 2,8.

The best overall mobility experience was met in Mexico and Indonesia (both 4,8) whereas the least satisfied were students from Vietnam (2,6). Culture was seen as the most important motivator to go abroad and as the table shows, intercultural skills were most developed in Ghana and Mexico, both evaluated as 4,9 and least in Latvia with an average of only 2,0.

Personal outcome in general was seen greatest in Bangladesh, Indonesia and yet again in Mexico (4,8) and less so in Latvia (2,4), whereas personal aspects such as self-reliance, independence and self-awareness were evaluated separately. The impact of the mobility period on self-reliance in Ghana received an average of 4,9 as the lowest average was 1,6 from Latvia. Students living in Greece, Mexico or Nigeria experienced most growth in their independence. Latvia received yet again the lowest scores of 1,6. Self-awareness was assessed to have the most development in South Korea (5,0) and the least in Latvia (3,0).

According to the results seen in table 10, the most popular destinations Spain, Germany, UK and the Netherlands are doing well in the comparison yet none of them are giving the best results with averages ranging from 3,7 to 4,5 depending on the aspect in question.

When comparing the averages by destination with the overall averages, a significant dispersion can be noticed. In overall evaluation, the result averages ranged from 4,3 to 3,7 the higher scores representing personal outcomes and lower the academic and professional usefulness in the future. The same trend between personal outcomes and usefulness in future can be detected from the cross tabulation based on countries yet the range of average values is far greater covering results between 1,6 and 5,0. One of the reasons for such dispersion can be that group sizes vary from 5 to 48 and averaged are more easily influenced by single differing opinion.

7.3 Satisfaction Evaluation by Type of Mobility

From the 425 students who took up mobility period in to their study plan circa 53 % (226 students) were studying abroad, 42 % (179) chose to do their job placement internationally and 5 % (20) combined the two. Compared to mobility destinations, the satisfaction differences among mobility types are not radical as greatest difference between average values was 0,5. The biggest changes come out in aspects of intercultural skills, which students assessed as average 4,4, interns as 4,0 and those who combined both as 4,5.

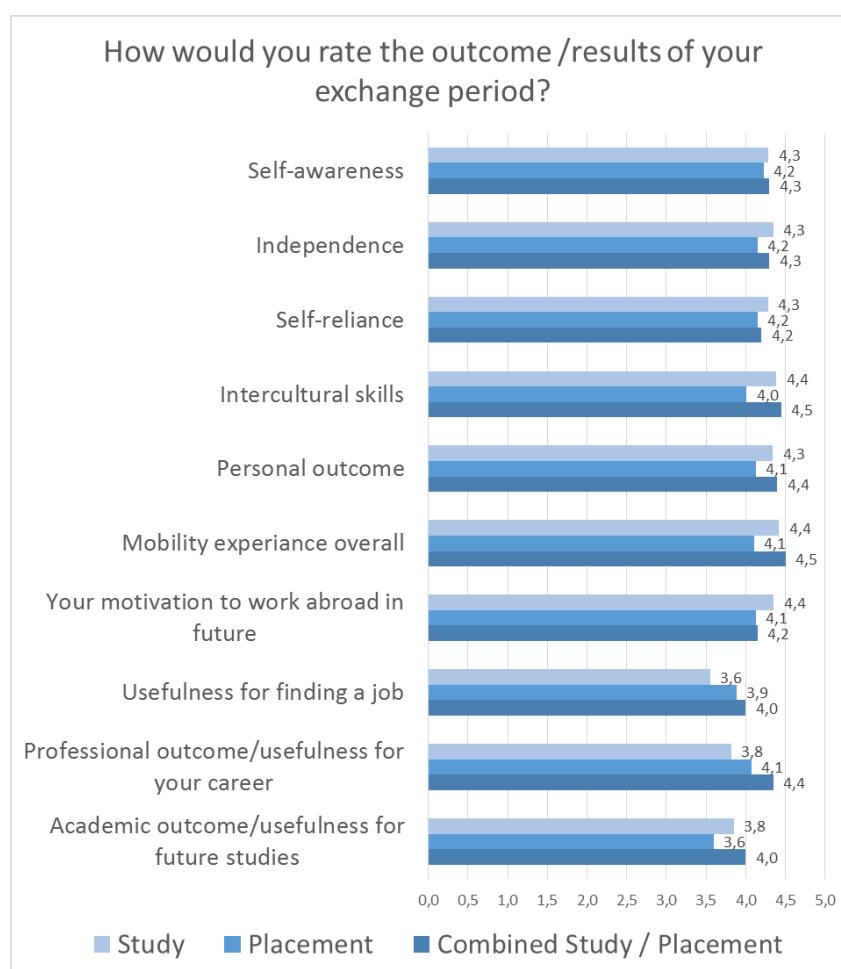


Table 11. Outcome of the Exchange Period by Type of Mobility (Laurea Statistics 2013-14.)

As the table shows, personal outcome as well as other personal aspects such as self-reliance, independence and self-awareness draw a unified line with all receiving average values 4,1 and 4,3. Students rated all four categories as 4,3 whereas interns and combined students had slightly more dispersion. In the case of self-awareness and independence, interns gave an average 4,2 on both and combined students 4,3. Self-reliance and personal outcome both received an average of 4,1 from interns yet self-reliance was rated as 4,2 among combined students and personal outcome slightly higher 4,4.

Overall, all three groups seem to be satisfied with the experience as overall mobility experience combined students being the most satisfied with an average of 4,5, students following close by with 4,4 and interns rating their overall experience as 4,1. Surprisingly enough, students are the most motivated group out of all three to work abroad in the future. They rated their motivation as 4,4 whereas interns and combined were less eager with an average of 4,1 and 4,2.

From a future academic and career prospects point of view, the three groups differ the most. Students found the mobility period least useful for finding a job with an average 3,6 while interns and combined students found the experience to have more positive impact on the matter with averages 3,9 and 4,0. Interestingly enough, the combined students found the experience to have least impact on their professional outcome and usefulness for their career (3,6) despite the usefulness for finding a job. Students and interns however were more positive about the professional outcome and usefulness for their career than about finding a job as the averages were 3,8 and 4,1 in this case. Opinions concerning academic outcome and usefulness for future studies were most positive among combined students (4,0) whereas students (3,8) and interns (3,6) found the importance lesser.

7.4 Satisfaction Evaluation by Exchange Programme

According to theory, the biggest mobility channels are Erasmus programmes supported by the European Union and CIMO, bilateral agreements between the higher education institutes, individually organized free mover agreements and Nordplus programme handling exchange students in the Nordic and Baltic region. Altogether, these 4 programmes dealt 90 % of the student exchanges in 2013.

From Laurea's 425 exchange students in 2013-14, 213 went abroad via Erasmus+, 65 using bilateral agreements, 117 making individual Free Mover agreements and 9 via Nordplus. In total, 404 students used the four most popular exchange channels, in other words circa 95 % of all of the exchange students. The resting programmes were FIRST (10 students), North South South (1), Other EU-programmes (2), Job placement via student- or non-governmental organization (1), CIMO Job placement (2) and Other job placement programme (5). In a similar manner with the destinations, all of the exchange programmes with under five students were ruled out of the variables as their averages cannot be seen as dependable enough.

The biggest exchange programmes are covered in the theory concerning student exchange organisations yet one included in the study, FIRST, is yet unfamiliar. Finnish-Russian Student and Teacher Exchange Programme (FIRST) is a programme promoting partnership and collabo-

ration between higher education institutions in Finland and Northwest Russia (CIMO 2015 k). Much like other exchange organisations FIRST supports mobility and joint intensive courses in higher education institutions as well as offers grants for participants.

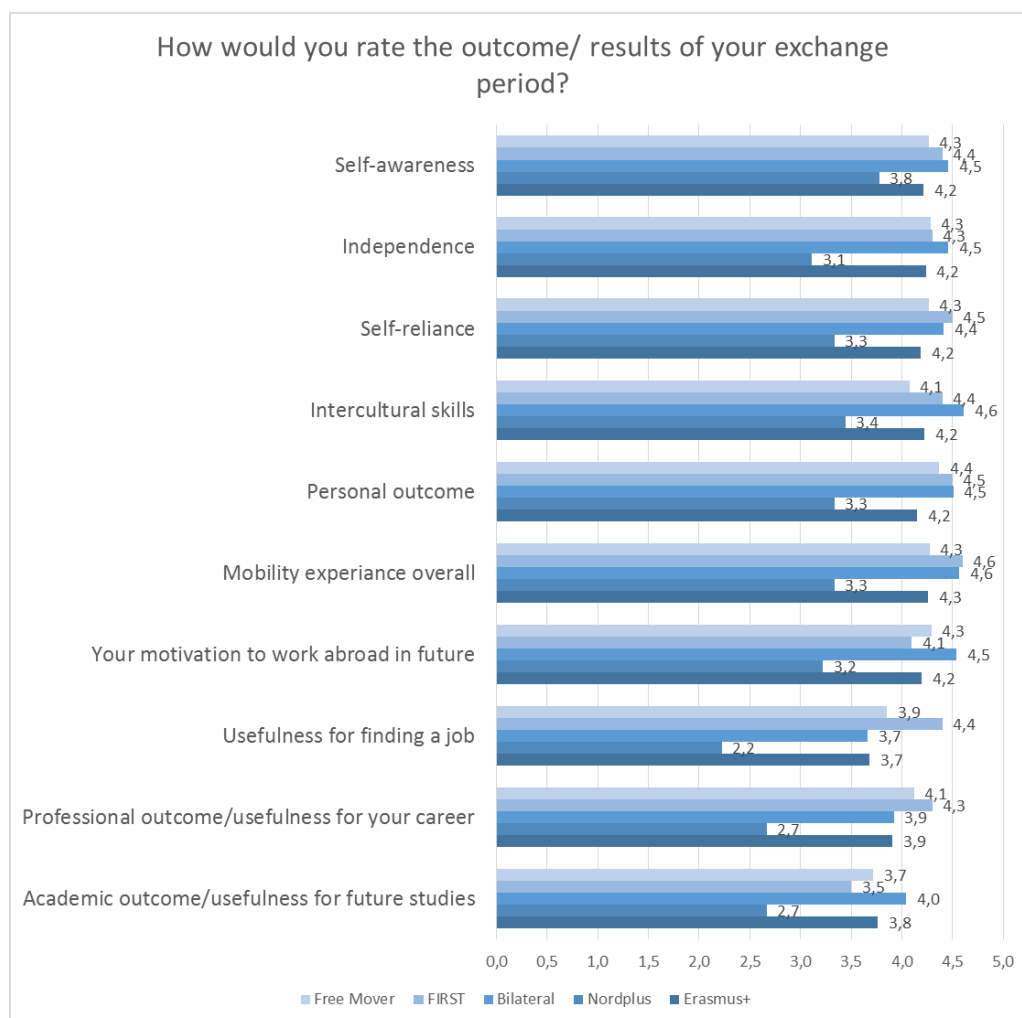


Table 12. Outcome of the Exchange Period by Exchange Programme. (Laurea Statistics 2013-14.)

As the table 12. shows, personal outcomes and aspects such as self-reliance, intercultural skills and independence alongside with overall mobility experience and motivation to work abroad in the future are rated the highest while academic and professional usefulness are not seen as important. The most satisfied students are the ones going abroad with Bilateral agreement even though the difference between Bilateral, Erasmus+, FIRST and Free Mover is not significant. Nordplus programme scores clearly the lowest of all.

In aspects revolving around personal growth, all 5 programmes reached the positive side of the scale. In personal outcome, Bilateral scored the highest with an average 4,5 whereas Free Mover and FIRST both scored 4,4. Erasmus+ had a slightly lower average value of 4,2 and

Nordplus scored the lowest with 3,3. Same pattern goes on with intercultural skills, self-reliance, independence and self-awareness, in all of which the averages between Free Mover, FIRST, Bilateral and Erasmus+ range from 4,6 to 4,1 leaving the Nordplus behind with scores ranging from 3,8 to 3,1.

When asked to define the overall mobility experience, Bilateral and FIRST scored the highest with an average of 4,6 whereas both Free Mover and Erasmus+ reached an average of 4,3. Nordplus was seen as least popular scoring only 3,3. All of the exchange students showed motivation to work abroad in the future, Bilateral scoring the highest yet again with an average of 4,5. Free Mover, Erasmus+ and FIRST received average values ranging from 4,3 to 4,1 and Nordplus scored the lowest with 3,2.

Academic outcome and usefulness for future, professional outcome and usefulness for ones career as well as usefulness for finding a job were seen as less important than personal factors or overall satisfaction. Bilateral scored a range from 4,0 to 3,7 in these aspects, FIRST between 4,4 and 3,5, Free Mover from 4,1 to 3,7, and Erasmus+ from 3,9 to 3,7. Nordplus scored the lowest with averages varying from 2,7 to 2,2.

The reason behind Nordplus low scores can be found in the small amount of students compared to the three biggest programmes, Erasmus+, Bilateral and Free Mover. On the other hand, FIRST had only one student more and yet the programme had competitive results. An issue can be found in the analysis process. The question was set in Likert scale meaning that the results vary from 1 to 5 yet there is a neutral option marked with a questionmark, if the respondent sees the question or choice as not applicable. The questionmark would not have an impact on the averages, but this said mark was written down as 0 in the results thus having negative impact on the average value if not removed.

8 Reliability Assessment and Validity

The questionnaire used in the research was collected by the Laurea International Office among all students returning from their mobility period. The questionnaire is compulsory to all exchange students spending at least three months studying in a foreign country and highly recommended to all those conducting a job placement abroad as well. The response rate was circa 77 % and the analysis included 425 responses from 2013 and 2014. All in all, the authority of the provider of the data is verified and the collection process well executed thus producing accurate data for the analysis.

As the data was anonymous, it is possible that one respondent has filled in several questionnaires if he or she has had more than one mobility period during the two years in question.

Additionally, the nationality of the respondent does not become clear from the data and as Laurea is a highly international institution, it is likely that foreign students have conducted, for example, a job placement in their home country and that is recorded as student mobility. Student's insight on his or hers home country as opposed to a foreign country vary greatly and it can be discussed whether or not international students carrying out exchange studies or job placements in their home country should be included in the survey.

When structuring a questionnaire, it is important to pay attention on the length of the survey and the number of questions in order to keep the respondent interested all the way to the finish. Depending on the target group, 5 pages can be seen as a maximal length. Other aspects to consider are clarity, appearance, logical progression and necessity answering instructions (Valli 2001, 29).

The questionnaire used in the research consisted of numerous questions in logical order starting from the motivation and preparation. The next steps were studies and work recognition and cultural experience and language. The final stage was overall evaluation of the mobility period. The questions were set in either Likert-scale, defined as dichotomic yes or no question or put in a form of multiple choice. In Likert-scale, the stairs in response options are named carefully and clearly in order for the respondent to choose the right option for him or her. A neutral option has found among the responses if the respondent does not have an opinion on the matter. This removes the forced opinions (Valli 2001, 35).

Even though the questions in Likert-scale did feature a neutral option marked with a questionmark and explanation: not applicable, the option which was supposed to be neutral was marked with a number zero in the result data. This way of marking can have a negative affect on average values if many students have answered not applicable. Another aspect to develop was formulation of some questions. For example, when asked which aspects of the mobility period did the respondent particularly appreciate, the options are marked with yes or no, even though more logical thing to do would be marking each option with a box and letting the student mark the boxes he or she found as relevant with an x.

Another thing to consider in the reliability of the thesis is objectivity of the authors. As both of the authors have gone through the Laurea mobility process, they have their own opinions on the matter. This can have an affect on the analysis when not taken into consideration. The authors strived for an objective analysis by basing the statements directly on the results or reliable theory references.

Validity in relation to questionnaires can be referred to as content validity, criterion-related validity and construct validity. In short, content validity examines how well the questionnaire

and the devices, or in other words questions, provided adequate coverage of the research problems. Criterion-related validity, however, focuses on the ability of the questions to make accurate predictions. Construct validity means the extent to which the questions actually measure the things they were intended to measure. (Saunders & al. 2007, 366-367).

Even though questionnaire used in the research was not first intended for the said purpose, it met the needs sufficiently. The survey included various questions about different stages of the exchange thus providing suitable coverage to the thesis cause. The questions were set in clear form which deminishes misunderstanding and hence, accurate predictions can be made based on them.

9 Conclusions

The process of going abroad is well organised and supported in Laurea, the International Offices being the most useful services at both home and host institution according to the students. The results of this thesis give insight on the mobility process in Laurea and are apt to develop the home institution services even further easing studying abroad.

Even though the reasons behind internationality as a part of higher education studies are numerous, the biggest motivators to go on a mobility period are cultural skills, living in a foreign country and practising a foreign language as well as acquiring new knowledge and skills thus enhancing ones career plans and future job prospects. Even though the mobility periods themselves are not highly valued by employers in Finland, the personal attributes, such as independence, self-reliance, and skills acquired abroad are seen as a huge advantage in labor markets.

Upon returning, the most valued aspects corresponded mainly with the motivators. Personal growth and attributes, such as independence, self-reliance, self-awareness, personal outcome and intercultural skills were seen as most appreciated whereas academic aspects which was an important motivator among students, was now seen less important.

The mobility students were in general satisfied with the International Office of Laurea, but there were plenty of suggestions for improving the services that International Office of Laurea offers. In the questionnaire many former mobility students complained about the platforms; SoleMove, SoleGrant and Laurea Live. Finding information from these platforms was challenging and complicated since there are many different platforms with complex user interfaces. The suggestion from the authors is that all the information, support forums, documents, applications et cetera are found under the same user friendly platform.

Other major development suggestion from the mobility students was that the International Office of Laurea should offer more information about host institutions and mobility process in general in the early stages of the application process. The authors would suggest that International Office of Laurea would create clear and informative profiles of host institutions where small description and recommendations or stories from former exchange students can be found. Additionally, starting Going Abroad course before the application period so that applicants could get enough information about the mobility process before applying.

Further research opportunities based on the topic are excessive as the thesis only scratched the surface of the data. Possible variables to determine differences in satisfaction results are numerous and comparative data based on time of the mobility is yet to be done as continuous data has been collected since 2011 even though the authors only processed data from 2013 and 2014. For example, cross tabulation based on the countries and time of exchange would provide more accurate data about the popularity of certain countries. There were also questions which were excluded from this thesis as they were seen to be irrelevant to the topic. Qualitative research on the topic would bring light on the various reasons behind student mobility satisfaction and perception of the outcomes as quantitative research focuses on numbers and percentages giving students only little room for open word to comment the services.

During the process, the authors got familiar with intensive writing and the use of Microsoft Excel and statistical methods, which were not used before in the studies. Searching for academic sources and writing in professional manner as well as formulating correct references was emphasized in the thesis process even more profoundly than in previous studies. Quantitative data analysis was introduced in the making of the empirical research whereas theory gave insight and knowledge on internationalization both in general and locally specified in Finland, student mobility and its connections to employability.

The commissioner of the thesis, International Office of Laurea, saw the research as highly useful. Similar evaluation between destinations, mobility types and exchange programmes was yet to be done and thus the research offered valuable information on the popularity of the given variables. The suggestions concerning the questionnaire and the mobility process as whole were accurate and will be taken into consideration in the future development.

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Tables

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Appendixes

Appendix 1. Feedback questionnaire for outgoing students. Laurea.

Questions

[Minimize](#)

	<p>Instructions</p> <p>This report on your experiences will provide Laurea's International Services with valuable information, which will benefit both future students and contribute to the continual improvement of the services. We would be happy to hear your thoughts on this feedback form! Answer the questions by marking the most appropriate option and by writing your answers to open questions in the spaces provided. Questions marked with an asterisk (*) are compulsory.</p>																																	
	<p>1. MOTIVATION & PREPARATION FOR MOBILITY PERIOD</p>																																	
	<p>What was the importance of the following factors in your decision to study/train abroad? Scale ?-5: ?=Not applicable, 1= Not important, 5= Very important</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td data-bbox="414 840 446 873">✎</td> <td data-bbox="510 840 1037 873">Academic *</td> <td data-bbox="1053 840 1332 873">○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="414 884 446 918">✎</td> <td data-bbox="510 884 1037 918">Gaining relevant work experience *</td> <td data-bbox="1053 884 1332 918">○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="414 929 446 963">✎</td> <td data-bbox="510 929 1037 963">Acquiring new vocational knowledge and skills *</td> <td data-bbox="1053 929 1332 963">○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="414 974 446 1008">✎</td> <td data-bbox="510 974 1037 1008">Cultural *</td> <td data-bbox="1053 974 1332 1008">○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="414 1019 446 1052">✎</td> <td data-bbox="510 1019 1037 1052">Living in a foreign country *</td> <td data-bbox="1053 1019 1332 1052">○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="414 1064 446 1097">✎</td> <td data-bbox="510 1064 1037 1097">Practise a foreign language *</td> <td data-bbox="1053 1064 1332 1097">○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="414 1108 446 1142">✎</td> <td data-bbox="510 1108 1037 1142">Friends living abroad *</td> <td data-bbox="1053 1108 1332 1142">○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="414 1153 446 1187">✎</td> <td data-bbox="510 1153 1037 1187">Career plans/enhance future employment prospects *</td> <td data-bbox="1053 1153 1332 1187">○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="414 1198 446 1232">✎</td> <td data-bbox="510 1198 1037 1232">European experience *</td> <td data-bbox="1053 1198 1332 1232">○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="414 1243 446 1276">✎</td> <td data-bbox="510 1243 1037 1276">Be independent/self-reliant *</td> <td data-bbox="1053 1243 1332 1276">○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="414 1288 446 1321">✎</td> <td data-bbox="510 1288 1037 1321">Other *</td> <td data-bbox="1053 1288 1332 1321">○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5</td> </tr> </table> <p>If you chose 'Other' please specify here</p> <div data-bbox="462 1299 1300 1478" style="border: 1px solid #ccc; height: 80px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p data-bbox="462 1478 534 1512">0/4000</p> <p>Why did you choose this particular host country/institution? *</p> <div data-bbox="462 1534 1300 1713" style="border: 1px solid #ccc; height: 80px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p data-bbox="462 1713 534 1747">0/4000</p>	✎	Academic *	○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5	✎	Gaining relevant work experience *	○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5	✎	Acquiring new vocational knowledge and skills *	○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5	✎	Cultural *	○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5	✎	Living in a foreign country *	○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5	✎	Practise a foreign language *	○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5	✎	Friends living abroad *	○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5	✎	Career plans/enhance future employment prospects *	○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5	✎	European experience *	○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5	✎	Be independent/self-reliant *	○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5	✎	Other *	○ ? ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5
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Please indicate how helpful were the following services / information sources before and during your mobility

Scale ?-5: ?=Not applicable/was not offered, 1= Not important, 5= Very important

Home Institution

International office/coordinator * ? 1 2 3 4 5

Faculty/lecturers * ? 1 2 3 4 5

Laurea LIVE * ? 1 2 3 4 5

Fellow students * ? 1 2 3 4 5

Online orientation course * ? 1 2 3 4 5

FUAS orientation day * ? 1 2 3 4 5

Host Institution

International office/coordinator * ? 1 2 3 4 5

Faculty/lecturers * ? 1 2 3 4 5

Web pages * ? 1 2 3 4 5

Orientation * ? 1 2 3 4 5

Printed material (e.g. study guides) * ? 1 2 3 4 5

Fellow students * ? 1 2 3 4 5

Student Union/ESN * ? 1 2 3 4 5

Welcome event * ? 1 2 3 4 5

Information session * ? 1 2 3 4 5

Intermediary institution (placements) * ? 1 2 3 4 5

Were there any other special events organised for exchange students/trainees at the host institution during your stay? *

Yes No

How would you evaluate the duration of your mobility? *

Scale ?-3: ?=Not applicable, 1=Too short, 2=Just right, 3=Too long

? 1 2 3

2. ACCOMMODATION & COSTS

Type of accommodation

- Private housing * Yes No
- University accommodation * Yes No
- Apartment or house together with other students * Yes No
- Accommodation provided by an enterprise * Yes No
- Other * Yes No

If you chose 'Other' please specify here

0/4000

How did you find the apartment?

- Through host institution * Yes No
- Through friends/family * Yes No
- From private markets * Yes No
- Internet * Yes No
- Other * Yes No

If you chose 'Other' please specify here

0/4000

Costs in the host country

Give an estimated amount in euros


 **Housing/month ***

 **Study material/month ***

 **Other living expenses (food, travel)/month ***

Fees at the host institution *


Did you have to pay any kind of fees to the host institution and if yes, what type and how much?




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To what extent did the mobility grant cover your needs? *


Scale ?-5: ?=Not applicable, 1=Not at all, 5=Fully


 ? 1 2 3 4 5


When did you receive your mobility grant?*

 Prior to your stay

 At the beginning of your stay

 In the middle of your stay

 At the end of your stay

 After your stay

Did you have other sources of funding?

- Yes No
- Yes No
- Yes No
- Yes No
- Yes No
- Yes No
- Yes No

If you chose 'Other sources' please specify here

0/4000

Amount of these sources in total per month (EUR)

Did you receive financial support from the host enterprise/institution? * Yes No

If you chose 'Yes', what was the financial support per month (EUR)?

Did the host enterprise/institution offer you any free benefits?

- Yes No
- Yes No
- Yes No
- Yes No

If you chose 'Other' please specify here

0/4000

How much more did you spend abroad compared to what you normally spend in your home country? *

Extra amount per month (EUR)

3. STUDIES/WORK & RECOGNITION

Answer questions regarding studies and work according to whether your mobility included them or not. Notice that in the scale questions there is always the 'Not applicable' option also.

Where did you find the information about studies in the host institution?*

Answer this question only if your mobility included studies.

- The host institution homepage prior exchange
- The international coordinator at home
- The international office of the host institution
- The course info was not available prior departure
- From other source of information

If you chose 'Other source' please specify here

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- Did you make a Learning Agreement/Placement Agreement prior to your mobility period? Yes No
- Did you make any changes to the original Learning Agreement / Placement Agreement? * Yes No

How would you evaluate the courses and infrastructure at host institution?

Scale ?-5: ?=Not applicable, 1=Poor/negative, 5=Excellent

- Accuracy of the course descriptions * ? 1 2 3 4 5
- Variety of courses available for exchange students * ? 1 2 3 4 5
- The content of the courses * ? 1 2 3 4 5
- Workload per course * ? 1 2 3 4 5
- Usefulness of the courses * ? 1 2 3 4 5
- Teaching methods used in the courses * ? 1 2 3 4 5
- The overall quality of teaching * ? 1 2 3 4 5
- Language skills of teachers * ? 1 2 3 4 5
- Access to libraries and study material * ? 1 2 3 4 5
- Access to PC and e-mail * ? 1 2 3 4 5

Were the courses you took at least partially taught in English?*

Answer this question only if your mobility included studies.

- Yes No

	<p>Did you sit exams?*</p> <p>Answer this question only if your mobility included studies.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p>
	<p>Was ECTS used?*</p> <p>Answer this question only if your mobility included studies.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially <input type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>How did you find the host enterprise/organisation/institution?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Through home institution * <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Through host enterprise/organisation * <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Through intermediary organisation * <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Through internet * <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other * <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p> <p>If you chose 'Other' please specify here</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 60px; width: 100%;"></div> <p>0/4000</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do you consider it difficult to find a host enterprise/organisation/institution? * <input type="radio"/> ? <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Did the host enterprise meet your expectations concerning the placement? * <input type="radio"/> ? <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5</p>
	<p>How would you evaluate your work placement?</p> <p>Scale ?-5: ?=Not applicable, 1=Poor/negative, 5=Excellent</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Tutoring provided * <input type="radio"/> ? <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Usefulness of tasks and learning experiences * <input type="radio"/> ? <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Language skills of instructors/co-workers * <input type="radio"/> ? <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Overall workload * <input type="radio"/> ? <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Overall quality of the work placement * <input type="radio"/> ? <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5</p>
	<p>Will you gain recognition for your mobility period abroad?*</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially <input type="checkbox"/></p>

If yes, what kind of recognition

ECTS

DS

Europass

Other

I don't know

Will you gain recognition for completing language courses?*

Yes

No

I don't know

Did not participate

4. CULTURAL EXPERIENCE & LANGUAGE

How would you define your level of social integration with the following?
Scale ?-5: ?=Not applicable, 1=Poor/negative, 5=Excellent

? 1 2 3 4 5

? 1 2 3 4 5

? 1 2 3 4 5

Did you face any culture shock or difficulties when you returned to Finland and/or to Laurea? *

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Language
Scale ?-5: ?=Not applicable, 1=No improvement, 5=Great improvement

Yes No

Yes No

? 1 2 3 4 5

? 1 2 3 4 5

5. OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE MOBILITY PERIOD

How would you rate the outcome / results of your exchange period?

Scale 1-5: 1=Not applicable, 1=Poor/negative, 5=Excellent

- ? 1 2 3
 4 5

Academic outcome/usefulness for future studies *
- ? 1 2 3
 4 5

Professional outcome/usefulness for your career *
- ? 1 2 3
 4 5

Usefulness for finding a job *
- ? 1 2 3
 4 5

Your motivation to work abroad in future *
- ? 1 2 3
 4 5

Mobility experience overall *
- ? 1 2 3
 4 5

Personal outcome *
- ? 1 2 3
 4 5

Intercultural skills *
- ? 1 2 3
 4 5

Self-reliance *
- ? 1 2 3
 4 5

Independence *
- ? 1 2 3
 4 5

Self-awareness *
- Yes No

Did you experience new techniques, technologies and methods? *
- Yes No

Are you more likely to consider working in another European country as a result of your mobility period? *

Did you encounter any serious problems during the mobility period? *

Yes No

If you did, please specify here

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Which aspects of the mobility period did you particularly appreciate?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Academic *	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cultural *	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Living in a foreign country *	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Practising a foreign language *	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Friends living abroad *	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Career plans/enhancing job prospects *	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/>	European experience *	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Being independent/self-reliant *	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other *	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No

If you chose 'Other' please specify here

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Are you willing to help other outgoing/incoming students with your mobility experience? *

Yes No

How do you feel the mobility scheme could be improved? *



Information, application procedure etc.

0/4000

Experiences from the exchange/placement



Please write short descriptions about your mobility period. These answers will be published on the SoleMOVE front page for other outgoing/incoming exchange students.

Practical matters and studies/work etc. *



0/4000

Cultural and free time experiences etc. *



0/4000

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR FEEDBACK!

Now please click 'Save and send' to send your feedback.